

Registered in Australia for
transmission by post as a
newspaper.

JULY 30, 1952

PRICE

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WOMEN'S WEEKLY



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Girl with a gift

By MARY SERGEANT

FOR the first twenty-four hours after Howard telephoned on Monday evening Ginny kept her head. From somewhere deep in her subconscious came a whisper of danger. For a whole day she heeded it; after all, there was nothing to get excited about in an invitation from a perfectly ordinary young man to an ordinary party at the house of a very ordinary mutual friend.

Herulically she managed to give Howard Tracey only a few very casual thoughts until she was lying in bed on Tuesday night waiting to go to sleep. Then the wild and reckless tones harnessed themselves to her thoughts. Manfully she tried to hold back, but soon they were drawing her along, gently at first, then faster, faster into an exhilarating race that she could not have stopped even if she would.

Howard Tracey. It was a nice name. He was a farmer out in Kenya, home on three months' leave, unmarried, with no girl-friends in sight. Could anything be nicer! As the wild horses gathered speed, carrying her into delicious dreams of courtship, Ginny snuggled deeper into the blankets. Very soon a proposal was ringing in her ears.

Though Wednesday was, to outward appearances, an uneventful day, Ginny lived it out in a fever of hidden excitement. Before it died on her she had seen in her mind's eye the cluster of diamonds that graced her left hand and fixed the date of her wedding. Thursday and Friday she shopped energetically for her trousseau in every daily paper and magazine on which she could lay her hands. By the time she went to sleep on Friday night she was stepping, her arm linked into Howard's, into her honeymoon train.

On Saturday morning, the day of the party, she was surprised to wake feeling low in spirits and curiously apprehensive. She glanced round the shabby bedroom that she shared with her younger sister, Tessa, and from which Tessa had already departed.

Overnight it had become newly, absurdly precious to her, because she was soon to leave it in exchange for a place on the other side of the globe about which she couldn't know less.

She pictured herself, clad in an enchanting summer frock, lying away long sunny days waiting for Howard to return from some unnamed manly errand into the bush . . . prairie . . . veldt! At this point she realised that her knowledge of Kenya was failing her badly.

She dressed thoughtfully, and, cramming the morning's shopping for her mother into the shortest possible time, left herself an hour to spend at the public library among the reference books. By lunchtime her knowledge of Kenya had been widened, if somewhat confused, by a miscellaneous assortment of facts.

Later, as she was sitting at the dressing-table combing the soft blond hair that surrounded her small, heart-shaped face that had the brow and eyes of a dreamer, a short, up-tilted nose, a gentle mouth, and an oddly pugnacious chin, the mirror was invaded by the image of Tessa.

Ginny swung round in horror. "For pity's sake, what have you done to yourself now?"

"It's not all that bad," Tessa said coolly, peering into the glass over Ginny's shoulder. "In fact, I think it's rather cute." She fingered her two-inch-long hair complacently.

"Cute?" Ginny said scathingly. "You look like a neglected orphan, and, anyway, I thought you'd promised not to cut your own hair any more."

"I didn't. Norah cut mine and I did hers." She scrutinised the back with a hand-mirror. "I'm better at shaping than she is."

Ginny's eyes fell to the level of her sister's skirt hem, which had been let down and cut into a fringe, Indian fashion. "Oh, how could you!" she said furiously. "You're nearly sixteen and you're no more to be trusted with a pair of scissors than a baby in a pram."

Tessa whirled round so that the skirt flew out. "Oh, don't be so stuffy," she snapped. "It's a new craze. We're all doing it."

Ginny's already low opinion of the average level of intelligence of the students of Tessa's art school dropped several more degrees.

"Well, don't let Dad see it, that's all," she warned. "There's already been one row this morning over the electric-light bill and because mother forgot to buy him a new tube of tooth-paste. If he sees what you've done to your skirt he'll be in a mood for a month of Sundays."

"Oh . . ." Tessa deflated visibly. At the mention of her father she changed from a confident adolescent into an apprehensive schoolgirl. "Perhaps I'd better change."

☆
Sleep was not necessary, Ginny could dream at any time
☆

She rooted through their joint wardrobe and emerged red-faced and cross. "My other skirt's at the cleaners. Lend me this one of yours, will you?"

"No," Ginny answered, irritated by her sister's stupid behaviour. Then she turned round and stared at the skirt Tessa held up. It was an old, faded tweed, bagged at the seat. The idea of its mingling with the wardrobe among which her thoughts had moved for the past two days made her blush with shame.

"Oh, all right," she said carelessly. "Take it. In fact, you can have it for keeps if you'll promise not to cut it up."

"Thanks," Tessa said casually, wriggling her way into it. By the door she paused and said a little ungraciously: "Charlotte's on your bed again. There'll be a row about that, if anyone finds out."

Ginny crossed to the bed, and, stretching out a finger, scratched the throat of the small tabby cat curled in the hollow between the eiderdown and the pillow. Charlotte's eyelids widened to reveal slits of lime-green; for a second she tensed her body, then relaxed, safe and contented. In a household of ardent dog-lovers Ginny was her sole protector and refuge.

Ginny stroked the small soft body with passionate fondness, then suddenly cried out in despair. "Oh, Charlotte, not again!" It was only a matter of weeks since she had spent frantic evenings searching for homes for the last litter of kittens, and here was another lot on the way, a fresh lot of battles to be waged on Charlotte's behalf.

Ginny, unhappy and alarmed, heard her mother call out that lunch was on the table. Without her protection Charlotte's expectation of life would be brief. She went towards the dining-room, obsessed by a picture of Charlotte, deserted by her beloved mistress, mewing piteously as she was thrust into a basket and relentlessly conveyed towards a lethal chamber.

The atmosphere of mealtimes at the Foresters' was set by Mr. Forester's temper, which was anything but even. As

she placed the bowl of salad on the table, Mrs. Forester, to whom cooking had never ceased to be a hazardous and heart-breaking activity, threw a hopeful glance at her husband's gloomy face.

Theodore Forester was in no mood to respond. His Saturday morning at the office had gone very badly indeed, for his own secretary, having done a little underhand work to get the morning off, had left him to the mercy of a nit-witted child who couldn't spell.

His family had never looked less attractive to him. His elder daughter sat so deeply lost in her own thoughts that she might just as well not have been at the table at all, and his younger was so unkempt about the head that he couldn't believe that he'd ever been led to think she was exceptionally pretty.

Ginny pecked unhappily at her salad. She wondered if they had quarantine laws in Kenya. If they didn't perhaps she could take Charlotte with her. But suppose Howard didn't like cats! Her father and her brother Ian despised them.

It was of Ian that her mother was talking, brightly and hopefully relating the contents of his last letter written from boarding-school in an endeavor to lighten the atmosphere about the lunch-table.

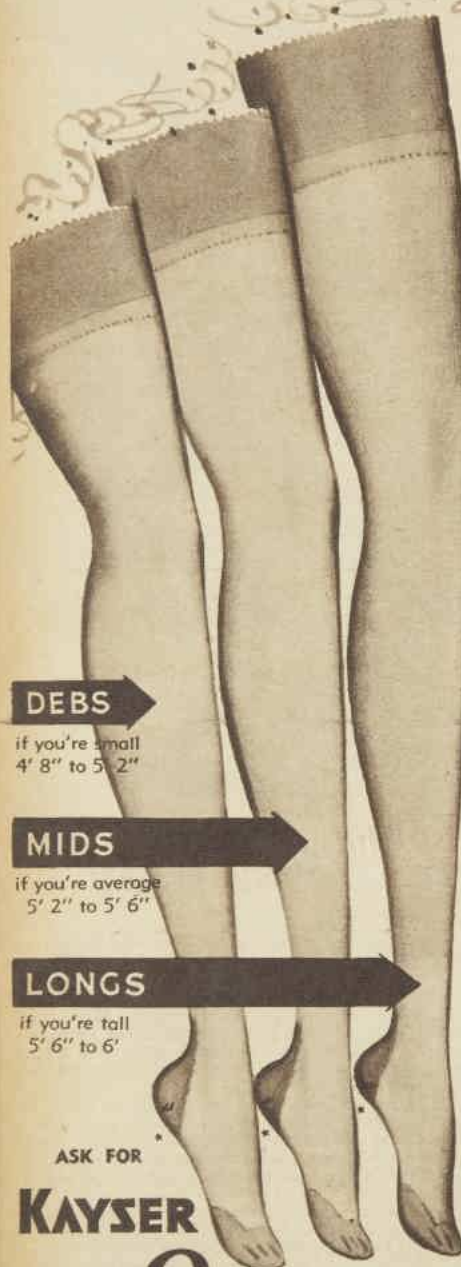
It was identical with the ones that arrived from him each week, and contained the inevitable urgent requests for food and money.

Hearing his name, Ginny remembered with a pang that he was going straight to camp at the end of the term.

Suppose she had left for Kenya before he came home again: suppose she never saw him until one far distant day when a tall, blond-haired young man came striding across the compound and up the bungalow steps, where, in classic and becoming white, she was waiting for him with her arms outstretched. Her heart twisted with pain and she pushed her plate away.

Please turn to page 4

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Page 4

TESSA said, "If nobody minds, I'll run. I'm going to the pictures. Ginny..." She gave her sister the grimace that was their private intimation to each other that they had something to say which was not for their parents' ears.

Ginny followed her into the hall. "What?"

"You're not going out tonight, are you?"

"Yes, I am. Why?"

"Oh, darn," Tessa exclaimed angrily. "And I particularly wanted to wear the heirloom."

The heirloom was a short, dyed, ermine jacket that had, rather inconsiderately, been left in her will to both girls by a great-aunt.

"It's not fair," Tessa went on in a burst of childish rage. "I never have a thing. It's beastly being the middle one. Everything's either for you or for Ian."

Ginny, without admitting the whole truth of the statement, was touched to sympathy by the speck of justice upon which it rested. She reached out impulsively and touched Tessa's shoulder.

"I've got to have it tonight," she said; "it's something special, but when I come in I'll give it to you for keeps. It's horrid neither of us knowing to whom it belongs. You can have it."

"Gosh!" Tessa stared at her with disbelief and mounting gratitude. "You're sure you mean it?"

Ginny nodded emphatically and went back into the dining-room, uncertain whether she had been madly foolish or merely patronising. But you couldn't, she told herself, take an old fur jacket, with the cuffs and collar edges rubbed down to the naked skin, on a wedding trip.

Her father had moved into the armchair with his newspapers, and Ginny helped her mother take the dishes out into the kitchen. As her mother bent over the sink, her wispy, untidy appearance smote Ginny with sudden uneasiness.

Most of the time they all took Theresa Forester's haphazard appearance with unconcern. It arose from the fact that, despite her devotion to them, she was never wholly with them, but wrapped up in the thoughts that went on inside her head, and which she never divulged to anyone.

But to-day the straggling tails, the broken comb, the shabby overall, the ripped pocket hurt Ginny's sensibilities. She saw them through Howard's eyes. "How would you like me to wash and set your hair this afternoon?" she said.

"It's sweet of you, darling," Mrs. Forester demurred. "But I must make Ian a cake. I've promised him one. You know, they don't give him nearly enough to eat."

"If I promise to bake him a cake to-morrow morning, will you let me do your hair?"

Mrs. Forester weakened. "I'd rather—"

"And I'll cook the dinner for you."

Mrs. Forester gave way to the inevitable. After her hair was shampooed and set to dry under a net, the two of them had a cup of tea together.

All the Forester children had a deeply protective love for their selfless and incapable mother, but it existed most ardently in Ginny. As she sipped the hot tea she felt the

Girl With A Gift

Continued from page 3

burden of her coming desertion press unhappily upon her. Tessa was so young and heedless; her father and Ian were males and born thoughtless. She was the main break-water between her mother and the constant confusion that resulted from her domestic inadequacy.

"Would you hate it," she said in a troubled voice, "if any of us left home?"

"Left home, dear?" Mrs. Forester looked perplexed.

"Well-married or anything."

"But I hope you will, all of you, darling. It's only natural that you should."

Her mother, Ginny knew, was visualising them living around the corner, or in the next town. "But if we went abroad—after we were married?"

Mrs. Forester put down her cup suddenly, her habitually dreamy expression giving way to one of alarm.

Ginny gazed unhappily at the face she loved. Suppose after she had gone to Kenya her mother should fall ill, desperately, fatally ill! She saw her stretched out on a bed in

Glamor in middle-age

ELEVEN film stars over 40, including three grandmothers, have proved that glamor isn't the exclusive property of young actresses.

Let's consider the grandmothers. Gloria Swanson, now 54, staged a comeback two years ago in "Sunset Boulevard." Strict dieting enables her to look much younger than she is.

Joan Bennett, at 42, has been in 59 films and has a book, "How To Be Attractive," translated into many languages.

The third is Marlene Dietrich, now 47. Her waist and hip measurements are smaller than when she arrived in Hollywood in 1930.

An article about the 11 over-40 stars, with pictures, some in full color, appears in A.M. for July, now on sale.

a bleak hospital ward, her eyes closed, her hands white and still, her eyelids fluttering as she called with her last breath the name of her eldest child. Tears struck the back of her eyes. She couldn't bear it. Not for any man.

"Ginny, darling, what is it? What's happened? You look so unhappy."

She managed to laugh, chokily, unsteadily. "Nothing's happened. I'm just being silly. I suppose I'd better take Dad a cup of tea."

Mr. Forester was snoring rhythmically, the newspaper spread over his face. She shook his arm gently.

"No need to do that," he grumbled. "I wasn't asleep."

She sat down at his feet. "Did you ever," she asked, knowing he had travelled in his youth, "go to Kenya?"

"No," he grunted. "Why?"

"I just wondered what sort of a place it was—to live in, I mean."

"It's full of black sheep that can't make a living in this country," he said tersely.

"Plenty of servants there to encourage them in idleness, and next to no taxation."

She stared at him, suddenly hopeful. Perhaps they could all go out there to live, even take Charlotte with them. Perhaps Howard could find wonderful jobs for her father and for Ian when he left school. Perhaps her mother need not live without her protection or die pining for a sight of her. "Would you," she said eagerly, "consider moving out there?"

"Me?" he spluttered into his cup. "Leave a business I've spent a lifetime building? And just as my book is nearly finished?"

"Yes," she said contritely. The book. It was a manual on precious coins, on which Mr. Forester was an authority. Its mention was an uncomfortable reminder to Ginny of a rash, unfulfilled half-promise into which she had been inveigled a month before.

He was watching her expectantly, the meaning in his eyes abundantly plain. She tried to steel her heart against his will, but the mere fact that he was often tyrannical, moody, and unreasonable, causing her to feel just resentment against him, set up in her heart a guilty feeling of indebtedness towards him.

He was her father, a man whose character made life black and difficult for himself. Surely, she should be prepared to do one last task for him.

"The index," she said meekly. "Do you want me to help you with it?"

"Yes," he said with alacrity, suddenly beaming at her. "We can begin to-morrow after lunch."

Ginny took her bath early, lying back after she had soaped herself, closing her eyes and letting the milky water wash over her limbs.

She heard the heavy pounding of tropical rain on a tin roof; she sensed, stretching out from the frame bungalow, the rolling grass plains across which wild beasts roamed.

Her ears caught the roar of a lion, sullen, threatening, and almost immediately she was startled by the quick patter of bare native feet, the frantic hammering of knuckles on the door. "Missy, missy, come quick. Massa hurt bad."

The bath water still trickled off her in rivulets, as, her robe clutched around her, she bent tenderly over the roughly improvised stretcher.

"Darling, he got me—sprang out of a thicket—I'm sorry," Howard muttered, and then, except for the black-skinned, shivering natives, she was alone, with the drums beating a mournful tattoo in the distance, and from the bungalow steps there came the interminable sound of wailing, wailing...

"Ginny," Mrs. Forester called, "are you all right? You've been in there such a long time."

The doorbell rang before she was quite ready. She hurried, thrusting her arms into the ermine jacket, pulling it up close to her throat to hide the naked skin. She felt desperately nervous, as if a play she had been rehearsing was about to begin and there was a danger of her forgetting her lines.

Please turn to page 26

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PX 52/L

REGULAR AND BATH SIZE

THE AUSTRALIAN WOMAN'S WEEKLY

Boy in her Block

By MEYER LEVIN

ILLUSTRATED BY LEONARD GREEN

As usual there was a line of people at the parcel-post window in the Englewood station. Emily Heggerty didn't mind; people sending parcels abroad usually had fascinating tales to tell of relatives in odd countries.

The woman just in front of her now wore a linen dress that Emily had debated over, with herself, all last week when it was in Christiani's window. Also the woman wore a little hat that Emily would definitely have considered too young for herself—indeed, young enough for her daughter Pinky. But, of course, Pinky would be picking up the loveliest, cleverest things in Paris.

Out of habit, Mrs. Heggerty glanced at the package under the arm of the woman who preceded her. The name of the recipient was inked in big, proud letters: Mr. Arthur Clay Wilk, 31 rue St. Peres, Paris, France.

Her intuition had been perfect. There they were, next to each other in line, both sending packages to Paris—to son and daughter.

Mrs. Wilk, the mother of Arthur Clay, was delighted into rills of laughter when she discovered the coincidence. And, believe it or not, they lived on the same block here in Englewood, and had never known each other.

"You know, my boy just loves it over there; he says it's really essential..." Mrs. Wilk ran on.

"You know my girl says..." went Mrs. Heggerty. "Of course I believe a young man should get out and see the world, and young people should have their fling," said Mrs. Wilk, and hesitated an instant, blinking with slight embarrassment, realising it was a neighbor's daughter she was including in the fling. But Mrs. Heggerty was full of the modern view.

"Oh, girls as well as boys," agreed Mrs. Heggerty. "Why should men have all the fun! And they both laughed. Then Mrs. Heggerty said seriously: "Of course, my daughter Priscilla—we call her Pinky—has a sound character, and I would trust her, anywhere."

"If I didn't know my Arthur," said Mrs. Wilk, "I might be a little worried. Some of those European women—you know they all have their hooks out for an American husband. But Arthur has a sound head on him. He's very mature for his age," said Mrs. Wilk.

They compared notes on what was in the packages. "Arthur says that you can really get all the food you want now in France," his mother said, "but I'm not taking any chances." So she sent him weekly packages of bacon, and butter, and chocolate.

They had got so interested in each other that they had to be jugged from behind when it was their turn to move up, and Mrs. Wilk was so entranced with her new acquaintance that she waited for Mrs. Heggerty. They walked back together, and they agreed that certainly son and daughter ought to meet in Paris. Mrs. Wilk said she would write to Artie, and have him look up Priscilla—"Pinky. I feel as if I know her that well already." She wrote down Pinky's address in Paris.

The plain fact was that Artie would never have looked up this American sample, except that he felt he could not risk at the moment failing to humor dear Mum.

Artie was a lad who looked to the future, and in a few weeks he would have to be asking for more money for the prolongation of his stay at the Ecole des Hautes Etudes. He was dutifully carrying on his high studies in Romance Languages, which he would undoubtedly one day profess at an American university, but he was also carrying on some fascinating etudes of contemporary French society, particularly as they were to be observed in the little side bars off the Champs.

So Artie went to pay a call on the damsel from the same block in Englewood, so that he might be able to write back a romantic chapter to Mum.

Nor did Pinky cause his heart to squirm, or arouse a nostalgia for banana-fudge sundaes in Englewood, and girls in sweaters with pushed-up sleeves. This Pinky turned out to be not bad to look at, though somewhat too athletic for his taste—he liked the fragile kind.

However, Artie spent an agreeable quarter of an hour with Pinky, discussing quaint concierges, the high cost of Paris now that the black market was finished, and the inanity of Americans who hung out only with Americans in France.

Artie wrote home to Mum that Pinky was a lovely, intelligent girl.

Meeting at the parcel-post window became quite regular. Mrs. Wilk manoeuvred her parcel one day so that Mrs. Heggerty would get a clear look at her Customs declaration tag. On it was inscribed: Nylons, 2 pairs.

Mrs. Heggerty in her next letter to Pinky hinted: "Don't be surprised if you get some nylons one of these days—and not from me. By the way, Mrs. Wilk showed me a photo of her son and heir, and he certainly looked romantic. I suppose a girl abroad would get lonesome for a nice American boy, someone she can be sure of. I never felt any European man could be trusted, and they seem to me pretty effeminate, I must say."

Pinky, on her side, was very busy with intensive musical studies. She was a strict devotee of long-haired music, and it was her ambition to perform as a violin soloist with the Chicago Symphony. Besides her studies at the conservatoire, she had been lucky to get special coaching hours with Professor Richepin.

There was a male pupil who seemed to have the hour directly after her, but on irregular days; he was extremely punctual when he did have his hour, so that she usually met him coming out of the elevator when she emerged from Professor Richepin's apartment. She carried the image of this slender, shy Frenchman back and forth from her lessons.

Each time when he encountered her he would smile shyly, and say "Good morning" with a saturation of accent that indicated it was the limit of his English.

One day, feeling certain it was French decorum that kept the shy gentleman from speaking to her, she manoeuvred a discussion that brought Professor Richepin to the very door with her, and there was her heartbeat just arriving. It was her lucky day that he did have a lesson; she had guessed it right.

Professor Richepin introduced them, and, as the young man heard her speak in French, the shy one burst out happily: "Ah, vous parlez francais!" As if he had been saving up this one question for months, he popped at her, "Mademoiselle, please can you inform me what is bebop?"

It turned out that he was one of the French who are long-haired about Le Jazz Hot. Now, Pinky felt no response whatever to jazz, swing, bebop, or any of the derivatives. She didn't despise the art, recognising through the devotion of so many serious musicians that there must be something to the stuff, but she simply had a blind area there. Until this moment, her disinterest had never seemed important to her. "Bebop," she temporarised, flushing: "It's very complex."

He instantly made a rendezvous, so that she might explain the complexity. His name was Pierre.

"It's the best collection of five in this city," Artie declared, as Pinky tried to familiarise herself with the musicians' names.



This was a crisis for Pinky. Where, in Paris, could she quickly and comprehensively be instructed in the very latest bebop? Pinky had been living with a French family of classical music-lovers. She had stayed away from the Cafe de Flore and other American centres of culture. But in her crisis she bethought herself of her countryman.

Artie met her at a cafe on the Boul' Mich. "Look," Pinky said, "you really owe me two pairs of nylons which you've probably given to someone more appreciative than I, but I'll write home that they were lovely, and that you were charming and attentive—only you've got to help me out with a little bebop."

Her hunch had been right. He was hep. However, when he began talking about people taking off, and senders who were still jivers, and celebrated artists all of whom seemed to be named Sugar, and when he began clinking rhythms on Pernod glasses, Pinky was left far behind, longing for simple classical harmonies.

"I'll never be able to explain it to him," she moaned. "You can't really explain it. It's got to be heard," Artie said. "Listen, I'll play some for you."

"You play?" she was a little surprised.

Please turn to page 6

She knows the importance of . . .



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ARTIE told her he had a record-player. Moreover, he had the best collection of recent records in Paris, and a mighty precious collection.

His garconniere was the real thing—a sixth-floor walk-up, very cosy, with dormer windows looking out upon the roofs of Paris, two tiny rooms with books on the floor, and old posters and Toulouse-Lautrec prints on the walls, a divan, a period chair, a tiny kitchen with a gas-burner, a tiny bathroom with no bath, but with an improvised shower.

Near the divan in the living-room, also on the floor, was his record-player and his records. He began to play them with a rapt air, and Pinky suffered through a collection of jarring and shrieking melodies.

Decidedly, the taste did not come to her. Enthusiastically, he explained which were bebop and which were swing. Everything just became a whirl of wacky names to her; all she could make of it was that anything played by a Fats seemed to be swing and anything played by a Sugar seemed to be bebop.

"Look," Artie said at last, "the best thing is, don't talk, just play the records. All he'll want anyway is to listen, and don't jiggle or wiggle around; just sit still and listen as if you can't understand why you don't get it—you're just not natural, but you can make out as if you get it."

"Should I sigh?" He allowed that she might occasionally heave a sigh of being sent and lift her eyes heavenward.

"Well, any way," he said, "your friend will appreciate it. It's the best collection in Paris. Probably on the Continent. If he doesn't fall for you after this, he's an old-time square."

"Artie, you're a lifesaver." "Wait a minute," he said. "Don't think I'm prepared to help you out gratis. There is a condition."

"Aha," she said, knowing that she would certainly discover now to whom her nylons had been given.

The condition proved to be slightly complex.

There was involved a jeune fille bien elevee. (But not too well raised, Pinky reflected, to pass up the bosery.) Also, there was involved a jalousee. It was Artie's plot that Pinky should arouse la jalousee in the well-raised young lady.

"You think I'm good enough for that?" Pinky taunted him. He studied her through half-closed eyes. "You'll pass. Especially when she considers the romantic appeal of your being a girl from home."

But why, Pinky persisted, was all this jalousee necessary? Wasn't the garconniere enough to enchant the young lady?

"You don't think she'd come up here just like that? Oh, no! Americans were all wrong about French girls, Artie explained solemnly; that is, the nice kind. In his sociological

researches, he had come upon the little-known fact that the French girl of good family is extremely well guarded and much less "modern" and less approachable than the American girl.

"I see," she said. "And where do I come in?" "Well, you set the example."

"Huh?" "Well, you know, at heart the girls have a terrific crush on the American way. They want to be free and on their own like Americans, and if she thinks I have an American sweetheart she'll get jealous and—"

"—and give you the gate," Pinky predicted.

"No, you don't understand European psychology," he insisted. "It's exactly the reverse of ours. She'll want to go one better, to get me away from you for good."

His scheme, as Artie outlined it, seemed very rudimentary to Pinky. The girl, Artie explained, was a class-mate in the Hautes Etudes. The best he had been able to manage with her so far had been a few movie dates, with one drink at a cafe afterwards.

At the next such meeting Pinky was to come upon him and his girl, in the Cafe Marigny. Pinky was to pull a big act. "So that's why you've been too busy to see me." She was to take a key out of her purse and hand it to him, with words to the effect that he probably had a worthier candidate for it now.

"Do you want me to have a hysterical fit, too?"

"No," Artie said solemnly. "Do it all very discreetly."

"Do I insult you in French or in English?"

"English. She understands enough English to get it, but you just pretend that you assume she doesn't understand."

"Wonderful!" said Pinky. "And, incidentally, what about my reputation after all this?"

"Oh—" He frowned for an instant. "After all, there's a perfectly logical explanation. I'll have to lend you a key, to bring that hot jazzist of yours up here, so you'll just be returning it."

"Me, bring him up here?"

"You don't think I'd trust my records outside of this place, do you?"

She could see that there was no hope of bugging him in this passion. "But what will Pierre think I'm trying to do, bringing him here?"

"What I hate about women," Artie said, "is their unwillingness to recognise the facts of their own behaviour."

"The nylons were lovely, just my shade," she wrote, "and I had ruined my hat pair only the day before!" And to make it good, "Mum, Artie has the cutest place and the most wonderful collection of records. He's crazy about swing in a serious way; he's really musical like me, you see,

Boy In Her Block

Continued from page 5

and he collects bebop. If you see any new records by anybody named Sugar Fats, send them to me for him. He'll be delicious. I'm making wonderful progress at the conservatoire and Professor Richpin says it would be a shame to cut short my polishing period. I don't want to put a strain on Pop, but with four more months I could reach my goal. Incidentally, Artie is staying on for another term."

"I'm so glad she isn't getting tangled up with a Frenchman, but with a real American," Mrs. Heggerty said to her husband. "You know, it really wouldn't cost more to keep her in Paris a few extra months than to have her here at home. After all, the Wilks are keeping their boy over there for another term."

The scene at the Cafe Marigny was, Pinky thought, a masterpiece of subtle underplay. She kept the key under her hand on the table for a full minute while she made a good, comprehensive inspection of the kind of female that enchants the American male in Paris. Her total conclusion was You Never Know.

She certainly wouldn't call the girl chic, or even smart. The mouth was nice, if a little pale and wistful. The very boyish blowaway haircut was cute. The eyes were warm. But altogether she looked anaemic, even a little mousy, and the only touch of glamour was in the nylons. But when Pinky withdrew her hand and the girl's eyes rested on the key, the poor damsel looked so hurt that Pinky wanted to tell her it was all a gag. Still, a bargain was a bargain. Pinky gave Artie a dagger-look and departed.

The next morning there was an urgent message from Artie. She met him, as he begged in the note, at the little cafe on the Boul' Mich. "Did it work?" she asked, but there was no need to ask. "She's leaving for Grenoble," he groaned, "to finish her studies there."

After a moment he raised his head like a brave soul who has encompassed his own grief. "How about you? How did you make out?"

"Too good," she said. "He liked my records?"

"Records? Oh, Sugar Lips. Pierre hates that stuff. He's classical like me."

"But I thought—"

"It was just an opening, to get acquainted. He thought all Americans love jazz."

"So?"

"I need your place again. We want to try some music for two violins. And he thinks I live there now."

"Two violins!" he hooped. "Why don't you go to his place?"

"Artie, I couldn't do that! And thank goodness he's not the sort of man to suggest it. He's very proper . . . And

besides, as long as he comes to visit me I can control the situation."

"I see. You just want me to move out of house and home." "It'll only be a couple of evenings a week," she said hopefully.

Suddenly Artie glowed with new life. "Listen! Pinky, sweetheart, you can fix everything for me! Do me just one more favor."

"What do you want this time? For her to find us in flagrante delicto? I thought people staged those scenes to get divorced, not to get together."

"No, look," he insisted. "I just wrote home saying I had to stay in Paris a few more months to finish my studies—mentioning that you were staying on—"

She giggled. "Maybe our parents are right. We must be soul mates."

"You pulled the same gag?"

"Of course, Artie."

"—So you see, after I told them that, how could I explain my going to Grenoble?"

It seemed a bit of a problem. "But why do they have to know?"

"That's what I'm getting at—they don't. Look, the cheques all come here. So you move into my place. You get their letters, and you mail mine. I could never trust a concierge for a deal like that."

It seemed a perfect arrangement. All Artie wanted was to take along his record-player and collection of discs. "You don't mind?"

"You're welcome."

And so they fixed it up. There was only one little slip. Pinky wrote home that since they were such old dears, permitting her to prolong her stay to perfect her technique, she was going to save them money, for she had at last located a little sixth-floor walk-up on the rue St. Peres, where she could cook her own meals, and she was moving in.

Mrs. Heggerty had seen that address too often. But she smiled wisely and kept the secret to herself. Young people nowadays had to do things their own way. The Wilks were a fine family, and their son could be trusted to do the right thing. When she met Mrs. Wilks at the post office, Mrs. Heggerty managed to conceal the address on her own package, for she didn't want to spoil the kids' secret.

With Mrs. Wilks, she exchanged delicious conspiratorial remarks about how you had to let kids nowadays think they were running their own lives, but even across an ocean they were manoeuvring them, weren't they?

It made her feel young again, thinking of those two love birds in Paris. What a romantic story it would make for Pinky to tell in later years, how she had gone all the way to Europe—to marry a boy from her own block.

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Wuff, Snuff & Tuff

FOR THE CHILDREN

by TIM



THE AUSTRALIAN WOMEN'S WEEKLY — July 30, 1952

The Green Vase

By BRIAN MYLES

ILLUSTRATED BY LASKIE

FOR as long as the tiny English village of Surreygate could remember, the old green vase had stood in the window of Miss Wilkinson's little shop.

In fact, Miss Wilkinson, the little shop, and the green vase were all as much a part of Surreygate as the old pump, long since disused, with its broken handle hanging drunkenly to one side.

Few people knew how Miss Wilkinson managed to exist. Her quaint little shop with its leaded windows was full of a jumble of Indian beads, books, woodwork, and local pottery.

There were also a few dusty jars of toffees and aniseed balls, and Miss Wilkinson's business consisted mainly of dispensing a ha'porth of the latter to the village children.

Occasionally, of course, she sold curios to any tourists who happened through, but such an occurrence was very rare.

Miss Wilkinson was rather surprised, therefore, when on one delightful summer afternoon a smart car drew up outside her shop and a brisk, well-dressed young man entered.

"Yes, sir," she said, hoping he wasn't just asking the way, like so many other travellers always seemed to be doing. There was something about the shop that attracted them to the extent of stopping to ask the way, it seemed, but not enough to induce them to buy much.

"May I look round?" he asked in cultured tones. "I'm rather interested in old curios, and you never know what you can pick up sometimes."

Miss Wilkinson felt a trifle embarrassed. She didn't often have people "looking round," and though he didn't look as if he would steal anything she didn't want to leave him alone in the shop, and yet she also didn't want him to think she was rude.

Her embarrassment, however, was soon relieved. He pounced on the old green vase and drew his breath in sharply. He held it up tenderly to the light.

"Fiseli," he whispered incredulously. "Did you know, Miss Wilkinson?"

"Wilkinson," she helped him out. "Did you know this vase is extremely valuable, Miss Wilkinson?" he said.

She raised her eyebrows slightly, but said nothing.

The young man, taking her silence as permission for him to continue, went on: "It is one of a pair made by Fiseli, the great Italian sculptor, who were born early in the seventeenth century."

He stopped and looked intently at the vase again, and frowned slightly. "Of course," he said, "as a pair their value runs into maybe two thousand pounds, but this is a nice little piece by itself. Of course, I'll have to get an expert to look at it," he added modestly.

The young man turned to her suddenly. "How much will you take for it?"

Miss Wilkinson looked at him for a minute. There was a slight gleam in her blue eyes, and a grim smile hovered round her mouth. "Twenty pounds," she said.

The young man seemed slightly taken aback, but he inclined his head gracefully enough and drew a roll of notes out of his pocket. Peeling off four five-pound notes, he tucked the vase under his arm.

"If you should run across the twin to this," he tapped the vase—"let me know."

He smiled a trifle as if he could imagine nothing less likely. He handed her a card. "I'll pay anything up to, say, five-hundred pounds for it."

Miss Wilkinson nodded and wished her customer a slightly tremulous good afternoon.

After the car had driven noisily away, Miss Wilkinson sat very still, then slowly her mouth curved and her prim little old-fashioned figure shook with silent laughter.

"My father"—she addressed the genuine Australian boomerang hanging on the wall behind the counter—"was a very clever man."

The next day was full of excitement for the little village of Surreygate. Mrs. Hopkins' eldest son, William, was due home on leave from the Navy for the first time for three years.

Young William had always been known as a thorough good-for-nothing, but on such an occasion old wounds are forgotten. In the evening there was to be a dance in the church hall to welcome "the wanderer home from the seas."

William was just the same. He flirted outrageously with the girls and asked Miss Wilkinson if she wasn't married yet. Miss Wilkinson looked affectionately at Colonel George Smythe standing next to her and shook her head.

After the young people had started to dance Miss Wilkinson turned to the colonel. "George," she said, "Come outside a minute, I want to ask you something."

"Of course, m'dear," said George, and took her arm gallantly.

Once outside, away from everyone, Miss Wilkinson spoke quietly and seriously.

"I want you to do me a favor," she said.

George listened for a while and gradually a look of bewilderment spread across his red face. He stroked his moustache, with its prickly points.

"But—" he interjected.

"Don't ask questions, dear," said Miss Wilkinson. "Just do this for me and I'll explain later."

Colonel Smythe shrugged his shoulders. "All right," he said, "but I don't understand."

Miss Wilkinson patted his cheek. "Let's join the party."

It was just two weeks later when William came to the shop.

"Enjoying your leave, William?" Miss Wilkinson asked.

"That's what I want to see you about," said William.

He took a brown-paper parcel from under his arm.

"The truth is I've run rather short of ready cash and it costs a lot to keep running in to London every day."

Miss Wilkinson nodded.



"I was wondering if you would be interested in this vase. I picked it up in Italy and it might be valuable."

Miss Wilkinson nodded. "I won't be a minute," she said, and disappeared into the little room behind the store, leaving William unwrapping the parcel.

In exactly sixty seconds she returned. There it was, the exact replica of the "Fiseli." This time, however, it was a brown-yellow color and a small piece had been chipped off the bottom.

"How much?" asked Miss Wilkinson simply.

"One hundred and fifty pounds," said William.

Miss Wilkinson puckered her lips into what would have been a whistle if she had known how. "Where would I get all that money from?"

William shrugged. "I could probably get twice as much in London," he said, "but I need the money now. Besides, I always support local trade." He gave an embarrassed laugh.

"How do I know it's worth it?" Miss Wilkinson said, looking at William with a worried frown.

William looked pained. "You know me..."

"And so do we," broke in the gruff voice of Colonel Smythe.

William swung round.

"This is Sergeant Appleton." Colonel Smythe nodded to a large, red-faced figure in the doorway.

William paled visibly.

"I arrest you on a charge of false and deliberate misrepresentation," recited the hefty arm of the law. "Anything you have to say will be duly noted and used in evidence against you."

"I don't know what you're..." William started to bluster, but he stuttered to a close as he saw the sergeant impassively noting everything he said.

"Better come clean, my boy," said Colonel Smythe. "We know everything."

"All right. I'll come to the station and make a full statement," William sighed, and followed the bulky policeman out of the store. The colonel winked at Miss Wilkinson and followed.

Miss Wilkinson picked up the vase and scratched it with her finger-nail. Sure enough a speck of green came to view.

She smiled lovingly, and tenderly made room for the vase in the old accustomed place in the centre of the window.

Ten minutes later Colonel Smythe entered the store. "Got the whole story from him," he said. "Apparently the man who first bought the vase has been touring the country playing his trick on unsuspecting people."

Miss Wilkinson smiled. "I thought you'd be able to. I didn't imagine

"It's extremely valuable," the young man told Miss Wilkinson excitedly.

William would be able to remain the strong silent type when trouble loomed in front of him."

She broke off for a minute while she put on the kettle. "You'll have time for a cup of tea with me, won't you, George? You can tell me all about William's story while we have it."

The colonel agreed and, as soon as the tea was made, continued with his story. "Of course," he said, "the first man gets his confederate to sell you back the vase and you're stuck with a hundred pounds or whatever it is. He met William at Portsmouth and thought it would be a good idea to use a local man for once. So there you are. We can't hold William. The arrest was just play-acting, but I don't think he'll play too many tricks in the future."

The colonel looked at Miss Wilkinson and said, "But what I want to know is how the devil you found out about the trick?"

Miss Wilkinson smiled. "You remember my father?" The colonel nodded. "A very clever man. Well, now don't tell anyone, but he made that vase, and the boomerang, and the beads. 'Fiseli,' my foot!"

The colonel spluttered.

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The Far Country

GETTING into the utility, Tim Archer drove it from the Banbury Feed and General Supply Pty., Ltd., down the main street of the town. The car was a 1946 model, somewhat battered by four years of station use, a sturdy, practical vehicle, with a coupe front seat and an open truck body behind.

In this rear portion he was carrying a forty-four-gallon drum of diesel oil, four reels of barbed wire, a can of kerosene, a sack of potatoes, a coil of new sisal rope, a carton of groceries, and a miscellaneous assortment of spades and jacks and chains that seldom left the truck. He drove down the long, broad, tree-shaded main street lined with wooden stores and bungalows widely spaced, and stopped at the post office.

He was a lad of twenty-two, with a broad, guileless face, with yellow hair and blue eyes, and a fair, bronzed skin. He thought and moved rather slowly; if you disliked the Victorian countryside you would have said that he looked rather like a sheep, one of the sheep he spent his life in tending.

His father had escaped from country life to Melbourne at an early age and had become a solicitor. Tim, in turn, had escaped from city life when he was seventeen, and he had gone to learn the business of sheep up on a station at Wodonga, in the north part of the State.

Now he was working for Jack Dorman on a property called Leo-

nora, twelve miles out from Banbury, and near a place called Merrijig.

Leonora was hardly to be classed as a sheep station, being only eighteen hundred acres, and Merrijig was hardly to be classed as a place, being only a school and a little wooden "pub" and a bridge over the river.

Tim had been at Leonora for three years, largely because he was in love in a slow, patient manner with the youngest daughter of the house, Angela Dorman. He did not see much of her because she was away at Melbourne University taking Social Studies.

He wrote to her from time to time, simple, rather labored letters about lambing and floods and bushfires and horses. She answered about one in three of these letters, because the country bored her stiff.

Tim got out of the utility, a big young man dressed in a check shirt open at the neck, a pair of soiled blue canvas working trousers stained and dirty from the saddle, and heavy country boots.

He went into the post office and said to the girl at the counter, "I'll take the letters for Leonora." The mail delivery would not reach the station till late afternoon.

The girl said, "Morning, Tim." She handed him a bundle from the stacked table behind her. "Going to the dance on Saturday?"

"I dunno," he said. "I haven't got a partner."

"Go on," she chaffed him. "You don't need a partner. There'll be more girls there than men."

"Where have all the girls sprung up from?"

"I don't know," she said idly. "There seems to be a lot of girls about the town just now. Mostly New Australians. They've got two new girls at the hospital—ward-maids. Lithuanians they are, I think."

"I don't speak Lithuanian," the young man said. "Aussie's good enough for me—Aussie or English. Like cartridges for a twenty-two. The Continental stuff's no good." He shuffled through the letters, looking for the one that was not there. "That all there are? Nothing for me?"

"Not unless it's there," she said with a touch of sympathy. "That's all there were for Leonora."

"Okay." He stood in silence for a moment while his mind changed topic. "I'll have to see about the dance," he said. "I don't know that I'll be able to get in."

"Come if you can," she said. "There's one or two Aussie girls will be there, in among the New Australians." She smiled slowly. "They're having favors—paper caps, balloons, and all that."

"I'll have to see what Jack says. He may be using the utility." He turned to go. "Bye."

He went out and got into the utility and drove out of the town upon the road to Merrijig that led on to the lumber camps up at Lamirra, in the forests of Mount Buller.

It was October, and the spring sun was warm as he drove, but the grass was still bright green and the upland pastures were fresh and beautiful. There were wattle trees in flower still, great splashes of yellow color on the darker background of the gum tree forests, and the gum trees themselves were touched with the reddish-brown of the young shoots, making them look a little like an English wood in autumn.

Tim Archer did not fully realise the beauty of the scene, the wide sunny pastures and the woods that merged into the blue mountains to the south and east, because this was

where he lived and worked and scenery like that was normal to his life. He only knew that this was where he liked to be, far better than the town.

He was depressed as he drove out of town because he hadn't had a letter from Angela, as he had so often been depressed before. He was sufficiently intelligent to know that his chance of getting Angela was slender, because she liked town life and hated the country, while he was exactly the reverse.

Still, he comforted himself with the opinion that all girls were like that when they were young; they talked big about getting a job in Melbourne and doing interior decoration and going on a business trip to England, but in the end most of them came home and married and settled down in the district.

He'd have to sit tight and let Angie get it out of her system, but it was going to be a long job, and the thought depressed him.

The property he worked on, Leonora, borders the road for about half a mile at Merrijig. From there the boundary of Leonora runs for a mile up the Delatite River, then up to the wooded foothills of Mount Buller, and then in a great sweep eastwards to the road again.

It is a good, well-watered property of eighteen hundred acres carrying two sheep to the acre with some beef cattle. The homestead lies half a mile from the road, a small bungalow built of weather-board with an iron roof and with verandahs on three sides; there is a stockyard near the homestead and a few outbuildings. It is reached from the road by a rough, potholed track across the paddocks with three gates to open.

Jack Dorman had occupied the property for eighteen years, first as manager and later as the owner by the courtesy of the bank.

He was sitting on his horse that morning by the road gate waiting for Tim Archer to come out of town in the utility. The horse was a rough pony, an unkempt, long-haired bay that lived out in the paddock and was never under cover, and never groomed, and seldom fed.

His property was about three miles long and a mile wide, and though

it was possible to drive over most of it in the utility, Jack Dorman preferred to ride over it on horseback every morning.

As Tim came over the crest of a small hill, he saw his boss sitting waiting for him at the road gate, and he wondered a little; the rider moved the pony up to the road gate and hooked it open for the car to enter. Tim stopped the car just inside the gate, and Dorman reined up alongside.

"Get the letters?" he inquired.

"I got them here, Mr. Dorman," the lad said, and handed up the bundle from the seat beside him.

Dorman took them, and sat on his horse looking through the envelopes. He was fifty-eight years old, but he had never strained his eyes with a great deal of reading, and he could still read small print without glasses.

He took one letter from the bundle and put it in the breast pocket of his khaki shirt; on that warm day he wore no coat. He gave the rest of the letters back to Tim Archer, who wondered what the one letter was about.

"Take them into the house," his boss said. "Get all the rest of the stuff?"

"Not the engine oil. They hadn't got any drums, not till next week's delivery. They said I could have quart cans, but it costs more that way. I went along to the garage and had the sump checked, but she only took a pint. She's in good nick."

"Don't ever go buying oil less than five gallons a time," the rider said. "Daylight robbery. There's another thing you want to watch. They'll try to kid you that you want an oil change every thousand miles, and that's a quid or so. Two thousand miles is what it says in the book. You want to watch those jokers."

"I never let them change the oil unless you say."

"That's right. Go down and give Mario a hand out with the crutching. I'm going up to the top end."

The lad drove on, and Jack Dorman walked his pony uphill across his pastures, heading for the highest part, where the uncleared virgin bush bordered his land on the slope of the mountain.

There were no sheep in the paddocks that he crossed, because most of them were in the paddocks nearer to the homestead where



**Long opening instalment
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By NEVIL SHUTE

Mario Ritti, his Italian man, was crutching.

Skilfully he was heaving each sheep up on to a waist-high board upon its back, holding it with shoulder and elbow while he sheared the coiled wool from its tail, gave it a dab of disinfectant, and put it on the ground again.

It was heavy work, but he could do them at the rate of about one a minute or more quickly with Tim Archer helping him. But even so it would take a fortnight to work the crutching through.

Dorman rode across the top paddock to where a rocky outcrop and a few gum trees made a place to sit in the shade, a place from which you could look out over the whole valley of the Delatite.

He could see most of his property from it, and the Hunt Club Hotel, and the track from the road to the homestead through his paddocks, and the homestead itself, small, red-roofed, and insignificant in the great panorama. For a minute he sat upon his horse contented, looking out over all this; then he dismounted and tethered the pony to the fence by the reins. He crossed to the rocky outcrop and sat down in the shade, and opened his letter.

It was a note of account from his agent in Melbourne, a long typescript sheet covered with figures which itemised the lot numbers of the wool sold for him at auction and the price paid for each lot.

A cheque was enclosed in settlement for twenty-two thousand, one hundred and seventy-eight pounds, eight shillings, and twopence.

He had known beforehand approximately what the sum would be, from watching the sales in the newspaper. Last year's wool cheque had been over ten thousand pounds, and the year before that about seven thousand, figures which had seemed amazing to him in their day.

Those cheques, however, had meant little to him in terms of spending money; they had gone straight into the bank in reduction of the loans upon his property and stock. They had purchased his security, but nothing tangible.

This time, however, it was different; this twenty-two thousand was his own money, to spend or save exactly as he wished, after the tax was paid.

When Jack Dorman had come to Leonora as manager in 1930, times were bad and wool was less than

two shillings a pound. Before that he had been manager of stations in Gippsland and in the Benalla district, and before that again, for six years after the first war, he had been a traveller in agricultural machinery and fertilisers.

In 1932 his wife's father had died at his English country home at Sutton Bassett, near Wantage, and with her legacy the Dormans had managed to buy Leonora with the very maximum assistance from the bank. Since then they had been deep in debt, head over heels in it.

For the first four years it had been touch and go whether they would not go bankrupt, whether the bank would not have to foreclose on an unprofitable business and sell the land to liquidate the increasing overdraft. The demand for wool for uniforms had saved them as rearmament got under way and wool prices began to rise, and for the past twelve years Jack Dorman had been paying off the debt.

On paper he had been gradually becoming a wealthy man, but this was hidden deep in the accountancy. The land and the stock on it had been gradually becoming his and not the bank's, but he still rose at dawn each day and got his two hired hands to work at the same time.

Still, too, Jane Dorman worked from dawn to dusk in the old-

fashioned kitchen of the homestead, rearing her four children and cooking all the meals for the three men, and eating with them at the long kitchen table.

In all those years she had had no help in the house, and she had only been away from Leonora three times for a week's holiday. They had had no electricity till two years previously, when Dorman had put in a little diesel plant. Now she was tired and old and grey at fifty-three, and the children were all out in the world except Angela, and they were rich.

Jack Dorman sat turning the wool cheque over in his hands—twenty-two thousand, one-hundred and seventy-eight pounds, eight shillings, and twopence.

Please turn to page 10

Eager and hopeful, the stream of migrants came from the grimness of the old world to the promise of this new land.

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LAST year's cheque had virtually cleared the overdraft. His balance fluctuated a good deal, but, broadly speaking, if he had died last year the whole of the money from the sale of land and stock would have gone to his heirs, a matter of eighty or ninety thousand pounds at the inflated prices of the time.

It was an academic figure to him, because neither he nor Jane would have wanted to leave Leonora; they had grown into the place and it had become a part of them. The eighty thousand pounds was quite unreal to them; if it was there at all it only concerned the children, and they might not touch a quarter of it if the bad times came again.

All that concerned Jack Dorman and his wife was that last year's cheque had made them safe; however much wool slumped they could never be turned out of Leonora. They could sleep without bad dreams of wandering bankrupt with no home, nightmares that had plagued them through their thirty-three years of married life.

Jack Dorman folded the wool cheque and put it in his shirt pocket again; this one was his own. He sat on in the shade for a few minutes looking out over his property, a grey-haired, heavy man of fifty-eight, humming a little tune.

Twenty-two thousand pounds and a bit, and the fat lambs, and the bullocks—say twenty-six thousand pounds in all. Expenses and income tax. He drew a stub of pencil from his pocket and began figuring on the back of the wool cheque envelope.

He'd whoop up his expenses this year, my word he would! He'd have to see his accountant to find out what he could get away with. He ought to have a new utility, a really good one. He'd keep the old car for the boys to use. Buildings—Mario ought to have a house and get his girl out from Italy; he'd be more settled then.

Could a weatherboard shack go on the one year, or would they make him do it on depreciation? If it went on the one year the tax would pay three-quarters of the cost.

Say twenty thousand for tax. He figured with his pencil. He'd have about seven thousand left after paying tax. Seven thousand pounds of his own money to spend or save that year, and the price of wool still holding nicely. He was in the money for the first time in his life.

There must be something that the station needed besides a new utility and a house for Mario.

Presently he got on to his horse again and rode down to the homestead, humming his little tune.

In the yard he unsaddled and hung saddle and bridle on a rail of the hay-barn, gave the pony a slap behind, and turned it into the house paddock. Then he went into the kitchen and sat down at the long table.

Jane was roasting a saddle of mutton for dinner as she had cooked mutton most days of her married life; they ate a sheep in about ten days.

"Want a cup of tea?" she asked.

"I don't mind," he said, and

The Far Country

Continued from page 9

she poured him one out from the teapot on the table. And then he told her, "Got the wool cheque."

"How much?" she asked idly.

"Little over twenty-two thousand," he told her.

She was only mildly interested. "That's a bit more than last year, isn't it?"

"Aye."

She said, "Like to peel these potatoes for me, if you're doing nothing?"

"We don't have to do anything," he told her. "Not with a wool cheque like that." But he got up and began to peel them at the sink. "You ought to have a girl to help you, make her do things like this."

"Where do you think I'd get the girl from?" And then she asked, "How much would we have of that to spend after paying tax and expenses?"

"About seven thousand, near as I can figure it." He scraped away at the potatoes. "It's all ours this time. What do you want out of it?"

She stared around the kitchen. "I want a Memory Ticker like Bertha Harrison's got, one of those things you hang up on the wall, with a long list of things to get in town and tabs to turn over to remind you. She got hers in Melbourne."

IMPATIENTLY he said, "That's only about five bobs' worth."

"I know, but I want it. Could we have a new stove, Jack? This one's about worn out, and the top plate's cracked."

"You certainly could. What about one of those new sorts—you know—"

Jane shook her head. "You've got to have coke for those," she said. "A wood stove's best out here, and only about a tenth of the money. Another one like this would be all right."

He said, "Aw, look, Jane, we've got money to spend now."

The anxious years had bitten deep into her. "No need to chuck it away, though," she said.

"We wouldn't be chucking it away. It would be cooler in the kitchen with a stove like that. It's time we spent a bit of money, anyway. We haven't had a holiday for years. What do you say if we go down to Melbourne for a week and do a bit of shopping, stay at one of the flash pubs, and see some theatres? I've got a lot of things I'd like to do down there."

"I've not got any clothes for staying in a place like that," she said.

"We'll get some," he replied. "After all, we've got seven thousand pounds to spend."

"We won't have long if you go on like this."

"We don't want to have it long. If we hang on to the money, it'll only go to the kids after our time; and they'll have enough to spoil them, anyhow. I don't hold with leaving kids a lot of money. We never had any and we got through."

She poured herself a cup of tea and came and sat at the table with him. "I'd like to go to Melbourne for a week," she said thoughtfully, "if we've

really got the money. When was it we went down there last?"

"Two years ago," he said. "When we took Angie to the University."

"Is it as long as that? Well, I suppose it would be. I wouldn't want to go before the Show."

The Banbury Show was in the middle of December; she always competed in the flower section and in the home-made cakes, and usually won a prize in both. He nodded. "Suppose we booked a room for a week about the middle of January?"

She smiled. "I'd like that, Jack. Give me time to get some clothes made up. I couldn't go with what I've got now."

"We could do a lot of things," he said. "We could make that trip home."

In their hard early married life a trip home to England had been her great desire, always to be frustrated by their circumstances. She was English, the daughter of an admiral, brought up in all the comfort and security of a small country house before the first war.

In 1917 she had joined the W.A.A.C. with a commission as was proper for the daughter of a senior naval officer, and in 1918 she had shocked her parents by falling in love with an Australian, a lieutenant in the First A.I.F.

Her family never understood Jack Dorman, and did everything they could to dissuade her from marrying him, and succeeded in preventing her from doing so till she was twenty-one, in 1919; she married him on her birthday.

He was a ranker officer for one thing; he had been an N.C.O. in Gallipoli and in France for nearly three years, and he had only recently been commissioned. He was an unpleasantly tough young man, addicted to a strange un-English slang, and he never pulled up men for not saluting him because he didn't believe in saluting, and said so.

Still worse, he used to have meals with private soldiers in cafes and in restaurants, and even drink with them; he had no idea of discipline at all. All he could do, with others like him, was to win battles.

It was a long way back to those bad months in 1918, but Jane could still remember the unpleasantness as she had rebelled against her family.

She had married Jack Dorman in February, 1919, in Paddington, a week before sailing with him to Australia, and her parents had come to the wedding, but only just. Nobody else came except one old school friend and Aunt Ethel.

Aunt Ethel was her father's sister, Mrs. Trebearn, married to Geoffrey Trebearn, a Commissioner in the Indian Police, at that time stationed in Moultmein. Aunt Ethel had come home with her two children in 1916 to put them to school in England, and she was still in England waiting for a passage back to Burma.

Alone of all Jane's relations, she had stood up for her and had told the family that she was making a wise choice, but she had cut little ice with her brother Tom.

Please turn to page 34

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Editorial

Vol. 20, No. 9

July 30, 1952

NO NEED FOR BLUE JOKES

AS part of Sydney's growth into a huge and presumably adult metropolis have come a number of night-clubs which offer, or should offer, the kind of sophisticated entertainment provided in most of the world's big cities.

At its best, the night-club is a high-grade restaurant where civilised people may eat and drink in a civilised atmosphere that includes dance music and often a floor-show.

There is a notion in some places, though, that it is necessary to add blue jokes, suggestiveness, and even outright filth to live-artist shows.

Apart from the moral issue involved there is nothing even faintly clever about smut.

A comedian or vocalist worthy to be called an artist should be ashamed to resort to it if only for the sake of his estimation of himself as a professional.

Two of the funniest men alive to-day, Danny Kaye and Charlie Chaplin, are two of the cleanest in their humor. Betty Hutton may be a red-hot singer, but she is not "blue."

The majority of people in show business, of course, observe the decencies and do not merit this criticism. But in the public mind the few offenders smear their colleagues as well as themselves.

It is a poor state of affairs when citizens on a family night out cannot seek a late dinner or supper away from the humdrum without the possibility of being subjected to something which may be thoroughly offensive to them.

There should also be protection for young people innocently going to their first "adult" place of entertainment.

Grubbiness, which is no substitute for wit, certainly adds nothing to the glamor which the night spots profess to provide.

OUR COVER

The Cat With Violets is a Chinchilla Persian named Princess Dewdrop and owned by Miss Mary Haswell, of Turramurra, N.S.W. In the two and a half years since she was born, Princess Dewdrop has won 60 special and first prizes at cat shows. Miss Haswell, who has ten prize cats, started breeding them four years ago. Before that she was interested in horses. Incidentally, the name of Miss Haswell's house is "Miowera."

This week:

● Our new serial, "The Far Country," which begins this week, is the fifth novel by popular Nevil Shute we have published as serials. This new story is set in pastoral country about 150 miles from Melbourne.

Artist Bonar Dunlop, who is a New Zealander, made a special trip to Victoria to get authentic backgrounds. He also sketched Swanston Street, Melbourne, from Little Collins Street to illustrate one episode.

Next week:

● The weekly articles by Joan Martin on home decoration which we presented recently proved so popular and helpful that, starting in our next issue, we will publish a new series fortnightly. Mrs. Martin has given some thought to the particular problems of readers, and, with her great flair for suggesting furnishing arrangements that have personality, originality, but yet are economical, she has planned a number of schemes that we are sure you will find of absorbing interest. One of the things we like best about Mrs. Martin's decorative arrangements is the use she makes of fresh pastel colors. Artist Kemble is again doing the illustrations for Mrs. Martin, and he, of course, translates her color schemes beautifully.

● One of the little-known beauty spots of the world is the island of Mauritius, in the Indian Ocean. Though it is a British possession, most of the white population is of French descent. (You may remember, if your school history holds good, that its other name is 'The Isle of France'.) This colorful outpost will be within easy access of Australia when Qantas opens its new Sydney-Johannesburg air service on September 1. It will be a main stopping-place on the hop across the Indian Ocean, one of the other main calling-points being an island in the Cocos Group. Next week we will publish some lovely color pictures of Mauritius, and you will be able to see for yourself what a tranquil but exotic showplace it is.

BOOK REVIEW

By PATRICIA ROLFE

MADELINE GROWN
UP
By Mrs. Robert Henry

MOST of us are grateful that time draws a kind veil over our first fumbling contacts with the big, wide world and the foolish agony of our first love.

But it's all grist to Mrs. Robert Henry's busy mill.

Mrs. Henry's "Madeleine Grown Up," the sequel to "The Young Madeleine," deals with the period of the writer's life from early 1928 to late 1929, during which she was a manicurist at the Savoy Hotel, London.

The autobiographer needs a prodigious memory or a good imagination to make up memory's defects.

For example, Mrs. Henry can tell us that it was fine on Good Friday, 1927, and that it rained on Easter Sunday.

But the fundamental equipment is—let's face it—a large supply of healthy conceit.

Mrs. Robert Henry is well equipped for her task.

Unless a girl of 20 habitu-

ally wore a thick veil she could hardly in such an atmosphere escape the stray compliments and attentions of affable visitors.

One man at least would fall in love with her. And that, over 313 pages, is almost all of what happened to Madeleine.

After a year at the Savoy, Madeleine caught pleurisy and at the expense of her fiancé, Robert, went to France to recover.

The French part of the book is much more interesting and sympathetic.

There is such a sad procession of invalids, whose chances of success and happiness are slipping away while they lie, often not feeling ill but just terribly tired.

"Madeleine Grown Up" as a novel, with its happy ending, even with its mass of detail, could have been entirely charming. But the perennial "I" is almost insurmountable and sometimes one must blush for Mrs. Henry's lack of reticence.

A thought to cheer her admirers and make her detractors shudder is that at this very moment Mrs. Henry, with her fearful facility, is probably engaged in cutting yet another sweet slice of her life for public tasting.

And a thought for the tired housewife—Mrs. Henry lists her "hobbies" as sewing, ironing, knitting, and cooking.

"Madeleine Grown Up" is published by J. M. Dent and Sons Ltd. Our copy from Grahame Book Company.

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Toddlers may suffer when Mum works

Untrained minders can't equal loving care in child's own home

● In this article a young mother sees a dangerous threat to home life in the growing practice of mothers of young children taking a job away from their homes.

"Is the extra money really worth while?" she asks. Mothers should consider whether they are handicapping the child for life by taking it out of the familiar surroundings of home at the age of two or three years, even though the extra money will be spent on the child or the home.

While realising that some mothers must work to support their children, she points out that emotional disturbances produced by leaving children to untrained people or child-minding centres may affect the child for life. Here is the personal point of view of one mother on a subject of interest and importance to all women.

By VERONICA WEST

ARE kindergartens and day nurseries—good, bad, and indifferent—taking the place of home for hundreds of children caught up in the present "working mother" craze?

Is the extra money earned compensation for the lack of mother-love, mental frustration, and over-stimulation which is the five-days-a-week lot of many children left "to be minded" when they are little more than babies?

Will the day arrive when this unnatural divorce of mother from child produces a generation of children to whom mother-love and family life, as we know them to-day, are outmoded and unnecessary indulgences?

I believe it is time every working mother asked herself: "Is my child really happy? Is my job really necessary?"

Aligned to the increase in the numbers of young working mothers is the alarming growth throughout Sydney suburbs of "private kindergartens."

While some of these parallel the high standards of the Kindergarten Union and the Day Nursery Associations, many are little deserving even of the name "child-minding centres."

Crowded rooms

HERDING together as many as 30 children—two to four years of age—in premises ranging from garages, tiny church and scouts' halls to a couple of rooms in a cottage, these centres have little equipment and no trained staff for the care and supervision of the children.

Fees range from 7/6 to 10/- a day.

While the life may not unduly affect the older child of four or five under four, its unhappy impact on many of the two-to-three-year-olds left from as early as 8 a.m. to as late as 5 p.m. cannot be denied.

How can it be classed as anything else but a current social tragedy—this "growing-

up" of youngsters not in their own secure home surroundings but in a strange five-days-a-week world of unfamiliar adults who keep order, according to the type of establishment, with:

(a) A number of strict routines, regimentation, and "harmless behaviour corrections," some of them more damaging emotionally to the child than corporal punishment?

(b) Outright threat of ruler or strap?

One day last week, at the gate of our local example, I saw a chubby little girl of two and a half years being dragged screaming from the arms of her mother by the "director"—a middle-aged woman who has recently turned the two front rooms of her suburban cottage into a place for 20 children.

Panic at parting

"BABY will soon get used to us," said the "director," keeping a firm grip on her struggling charge and ushering the mother off.

Momentarily disturbed by the child's panic, the mother hesitated, then, seeing her bus coming, raced for it.

She couldn't afford to be late for work because "John and I just couldn't manage these days without my salary."

Why should a child of any pre-school age be forced to accept a substitute—even the very best—for his mother?

For deserted wives, widows, or other women who must become breadwinners and place their children in other people's care, I have only the deepest sympathy.

A widow receives £3/5/- a week when she has children under 16. As well as child endowment of 5/- a week for the first child and 10/- each weekly for other children she receives £1 a month for one child, £3 monthly for two children, £5 for three children, and so on.

It is understandable that widows are forced to supplement these amounts by working, even though they realise that the more important job—the care of their children—is suffering.

For women who merely

dump their children into kindergartens or nurseries almost as soon as the youngsters can walk to resume a social or sporting round I have only contempt.

But it is for the growing legions of women who are working because "Peter and I simply couldn't make ends meet without my salary" that this article is written.

I can only believe that it is ignorance which leads them deliberately to deprive their child of a mother's personal and individual love at a stage in his life when he really needs it.

Mother-love is not a pretty little term of affection expressed with much cooing and cuddling of a rosy-pink baby.

It is a force vital to the physical and mental development of a child in its early years, it is more necessary than food and clinical care, and is the foundation of a well-balanced adult personality.

When kindergartens were established in Australia, early in the century, on lines pioneered by the now famous Madame Montessori in Italy, their purpose was to give the pre-school child companionship with children about his own age at a time when it would benefit his development.

At kindergartens he learned to co-operate with others, to enjoy the dancing and singing and fun of the programme—the perfect link between home and school.

A kindergarten is therefore not merely a place where children are minded.

Let's take a good look at the two-to-three-year-old in a normal home. Given the most understanding parents, he still finds it a difficult age. Up at last on his feet, he's trying desperately to do things for himself, and his frustration at his failure is comic but real.

Depends on parents

HIS bossy, but suffers mental frenzy at too much bossiness in others, and he's completely contradictory. Sometimes he himself doesn't know what he wants, and is apt to snap at Dad if that Master Mind can't figure it out either.

He depends completely on



TANTRUMS such as this at home may be the result of exhaustion and frustration when a two-year-old spends five days a week in a child-minding establishment, bewildered and over-stimulated by being left among 20 or 30 other children.

Mum and Dad for security—has an overwhelming fear of desertion by one or the other.

His familiar routine consists of pottering around home with his collection of toys, and he learns from the person best able to teach him, Mum.

Now take Mum's decision to work and its impact on the hundreds of two-to-three-year-olds in Sydney homes. More personally, let's take one little girl.

For five days a week, whether she feels off-color or not, she's dressed, rushed through breakfast (I defy any working woman trying to "get-off" her husband, herself, and child to deny that early morning chaos), dragged away from that fascinating play spot in the backyard, and rushed down the street (sometimes in a stroller, because those chubby legs aren't geared to Mum's timetable).

Still sobbing after a panic parting from her mother, she is crowded with other children in the room, garage, or hall, or left on the lawn, where older children are making their own noisy, shouting play and where several of her contemporaries are sitting isolated, sucking their thumbs.

After lunch at noon, she is put down on a bed and under threat of punishment dared to get off it for the next two hours. Her wonderful "kindergarten afternoon" varies little from the morning, and at 5 p.m., just on dark in the

winter, she is "collected" by her mother.

Have a good look at the peaked white face of your two-to-three-year-old after some weeks of a steady diet of this, five days a week.

Then try to convince yourself that the money you're earning is really for her benefit.

Fits of temper

AND that screaming tantrum of hers at home at night, that you "simply can't understand"? Isn't it more likely to be a letting-go of the control she's been forced to keep during an interminable day of frustration, over-stimulation, and over-tiredness?

I know of the following disciplinary routines in some unofficial "minding centres."

Under the stern face of a young or old "teacher," often armed with ruler or strap, some of the "getting off the bed" children have their hands tied, others are made to sit on cupboards, some are made to lie on the floor under the beds, and still others are isolated alone in a locked room.

No doubt, in time, these "naughty" children become "good." I can only hope they do. The mind of the mentally alert child who fights off sleep must be a crazy whirl at the end of the day.

If you must work five days a week, at least go into the business of entrusting the care of your child to other persons

sanely and wisely, and with your child's mental happiness, stability, and future as a well-balanced personality your FIRST consideration.

Look around for another woman—grandma, or another relative, a motherly neighbor—and pay your high fees to one of these.

If kindergarten or nursery it must be, find the very best. Don't accept assurances over the gate that your child is happy there. Make sure that the persons conducting it are fully qualified to do so, and that even with training they are basically good, understanding types with children.

Pay surprise visits during the day and check up on whether that hot lunch is included in the fees, is really a hot lunch and not a mess of tinny spaghetti and a spoonful of custard.

Most important of all, take weeks getting your child used to being parted from you an hour or two the first day, and gradually extending the time.

Happier compromise than the full working week is to take work into the home, if possible, or a three-day-a-week job. Let your child in this way enjoy the fun and companionship the best kindergarten offers without it becoming a deadeningly daily duty.

If your child isn't ready for any type of kindergarten for any length of time, hand in your resignation to your boss.

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Musts and must nots of a school dance

Taxis and flowers—are they extravagant?

Before Melbourne Grammar's school dance this month the headmaster, Mr. B. W. Hone, wrote to the boys' parents setting out the school's attitude on the dance and also on dinners and parties which Melbourne Grammar boys might attend.

He urged parents to co-operate with the school in keeping the dance inexpensive, youthful, and unsophisticated. He deplored expensive flowers for the boys' partners, taxis, and a "night-club attitude."

Miss D. J. Ross, headmistress of Merton Hall, Melbourne Grammar's sister school, sent a similar letter to parents about Merton's dance on July 25.

Parents endorsed the schools' attitude. But what do the schoolboys and schoolgirls think of it?

In order to find out, we set out the points Mr. Hone made in his letter to parents, and Judith Eddie, of our Melbourne staff, asked two boys and two girls for their comments and opinions. This is what they said:

• A school dance is part of general education.

Girl No. 1, aged 15, from Merton Hall: "I feel very strongly that it is. A school dance helps a girl with her development. She must learn how to behave with boys and learn all the social things she has to know."

Girl No. 2, aged 16, from Merton Hall: "That's what we're told school dances are for, but I don't think kids realise that. They just think a school dance is fun."

Boy No. 1, an 18-year-old pupil of Melbourne Grammar: "School dances are definitely part of general education. They are one of the few opportunities boys and girls have of getting together."

Boy No. 2, also 18, also a college boy: "I agree. In a school, especially a boarding-school, where boys are shut away together, they need to learn to mix with members of the other sex under the auspices of the school."

• Dinners parents give for a few boys and girls before the dance should be simple. Boys should help with the washing-up, if necessary.

Girl No. 1: "If parents want to have boys and girls to dinner before a dance they should also provide someone to do the washing-up. You don't want to go into the kitchen just before you go to a dance."

Girl No. 2: "It depends on the kids and what they're used to. I don't suppose the dinner should be too extravagant. But washing-up—how ridiculous! They'd never possibly have time. It's such a rush as it is."

Boy No. 1: "The simple buffet dinner we usually go to

is much better than an elaborate meal. Quite often we help with the washing-up at informal parties and dances, but an accident at the sink would ruin our clothes. When we're dressed formally it would be a disaster."

Boy No. 2: "If you start doing the washing-up you won't enjoy yourself much at a dance. Besides, parents don't mind washing-up after dinner on a special occasion."

• A taxi and expensive flowers for a partner are unnecessary. (A boy in the Intermediate class at Melbourne Grammar asked his mother for £5 for last year's dance in order to buy his partner dinner, an orchid, and generally "keep up appearances.")

Girl No. 1: "A taxi depends on circumstances. Parents often arrange transport if a boy and a girl have to go a long way and trams are not handy. Five pounds for taxi, dinner, and orchid is unnecessary for boys and girls of 15 and 16. You could have a cheap flower, but there is plenty of time for that later on."

Girl No. 2: "A taxi is rather fun, and if you're in a long dress it's a nuisance to trail round in trams. But I suppose it's a bit expensive for the boy if you live a long way out. Flowers are rather nice, but tough on the boys because it's hard to get cheap ones."

Boy No. 1: "As far as calling for a girl is concerned, a lot depends on the weather. If it's fine I think a taxi is unnecessary to take her to a dance, but if the weather is bad it's only fair to see that her clothes are not spoilt. I do think that if a chap isn't lucky enough to arrange transport with one of his friends, a taxi is a 'must' to take her home. After taking a girl home it isn't easy to catch trams or trains yourself. I've sometimes walked terrific distances, much to my parents' upset. They prefer me to use a taxi rather than walk the streets at that time of night."

Boy No. 2: "If a chap hasn't his own car and hasn't been lucky enough to arrange transport with another chap, a taxi is essential for the smooth running of the evening. But flowers—that's a bit too much."

• It's a boy's responsibility to see that his partner has an enjoyable evening.

Girl No. 1: "Definitely it's his job."

Girl No. 2: "My goodness, yes. I'd have been furious if



FAMILY CAR used by this boy and girl is the most acceptable transportation when going to a dance. Schoolboys and schoolgirls claim that on a wet night, and lacking dad's car or a lift, a taxi is a necessity.

I hadn't enjoyed my evening. I wouldn't have known another soul in the hall besides my partner unless he had introduced me to his friends. Otherwise I'd have been left sitting, because we weren't supposed to have more than three or four dances with each bloke."

Boy No. 1: "If I think enough of a girl to take her to a dance I like to see she has a good time."

Boy No. 2: "Definitely yes."

• Boys will be discouraged—if not directly forbidden—from dancing with the same girl the whole evening.

Girl No. 1: "It's more fun to change round partners than to dance with the one boy all the evening."

Girl No. 2: "Parents aren't really interested in whether the boys dance with the same girls all the evening. If the

head boy instructed the boys not to they would probably make an effort."

Boy No. 1: "I'd rather change partners frequently at private parties

or dances, but it's not always possible at a public dance if a boy and a girl go there as a couple and not with a party. Changing partners is much easier at a dance arranged by girls, as they are the hostesses and invite boys who come alone."

Boy No. 2: "It should be discouraged. It's up to the boy to see that his partner meets other people and that he meets and mixes with other girls."

• Schoolboys and schoolgirls should not ape "the passing anti-social fashion of the night-clubs of the city."

Girl No. 1: "There's plenty of time for night-clubs when you get to 18 or over and begin to think seriously about a boy. When you're at school the main thing is to have fun. But when you get older you become more serious and think about night-clubs."

Girl No. 2: "I don't suppose they should, but they will, so it doesn't matter what anyone says."

Boy No. 1: "I haven't heard of any Melbourne boys going to night-clubs to be able to ape the fashions. The idea may have come from Sydney—friends of mine go to them there."

Boy No. 2: "I presume he's trying to say that schoolboys and schoolgirls shouldn't act sophisticated and make believe they're older than they are. If that's what he's after, I quite agree."

• It's part of a boy's training to learn to be chivalrous towards girls, to learn to make conversation and be polite to people he is meeting for the first time.

Girl No. 1: "Perfectly right. It doesn't matter what a boy looks like, but if he can talk it's fun and that's all that matters. He should be polite. If he's going to be rude, people won't like him much."

Girl No. 2: "Definitely so. It's a bit poor if you've got to make all the conversation yourself. Boys are supposed to be trained already by the time they take a girl to a dance. Some boys are sophisticated but not frightfully well-behaved. When they're on their own they're all right, but in groups they're mostly bad-mannered."

Boy No. 1: "Yes, I agree. But boys in their last years at school rather resent being ordered what to do. We feel that by that time we know both from home and school training how to conduct ourselves."

Boy No. 2: "It's positively essential if you're going to get on in the world."

• Girls and boys are expected to go straight home when the dance ends at 11.45.

Girl No. 1: "In regard to dances generally, a super-party afterwards at the home of the boy's parents is all right so long as it's a Saturday night and ends by 1 a.m."

Girl No. 2: "It's nice to go to somebody's home and have something to eat and a chat before going home, but you shouldn't go on to another dance."

Boy No. 1: "This depends on the age of the boys and girls. Younger ones at their first dance should go straight home, but there's no harm in older students going to supper at someone's home or calling in at another dance if the first one ends at 11.45."

Boy No. 2: "It should be left to the boys' discretion. Not many chaps can afford to take a girl somewhere else after a dance, but if they can it should be left to them to see that the girl doesn't get home too late. After all, you have to take the consequences in your pocket and from parents."



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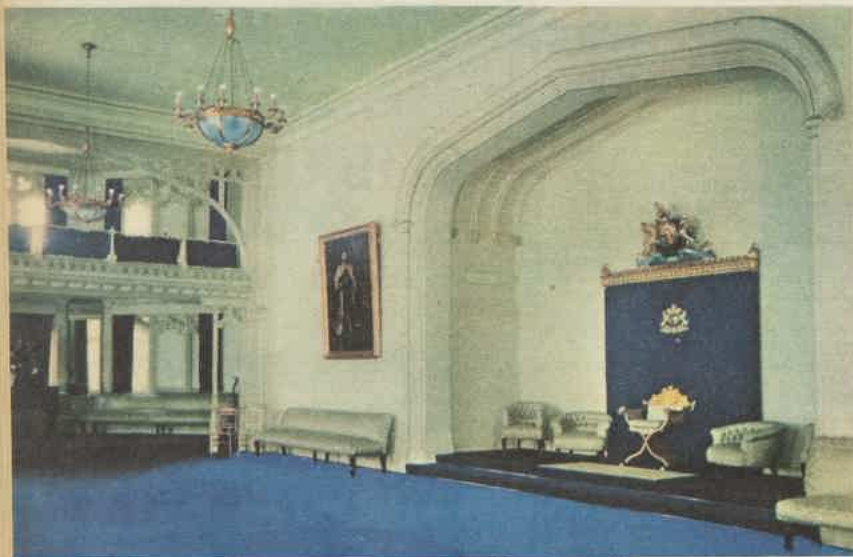
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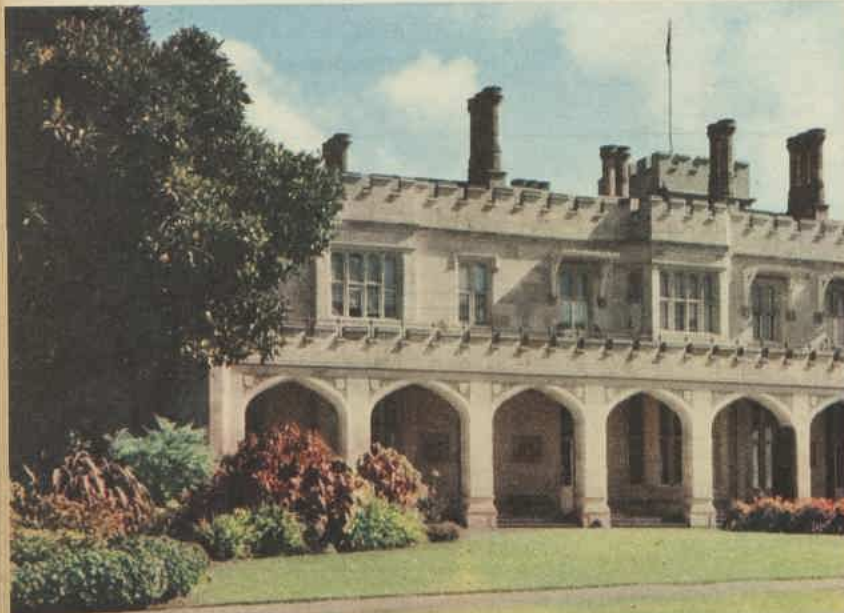


FORMAL WALK which leads to the lily pond at Government House, Sydney, is lined with clipped pines. This is the view from the wide verandahs connected by french windows with the ballroom and formal reception-rooms. When the Governor entertains on summer nights, guests stroll in the gardens.



BALLROOM. Windsor-blue carpet covers the parquet floor when the ballroom is transformed into a reception-room. The orchestra plays from the gallery.

TUDOR ARCHITECTURE. The north-easterly aspect of Government House (below). From this verandah the photograph at the top of the page was taken.



INSIDE Government House SYDNEY

By JOYCE BOWDEN

● One of the storied places of Sydney is Government House, which occupies a magnificent position in the heart of the city overlooking the Harbor. An impressive Tudor mansion, it is at present the home of the first Australian-born Governor of New South Wales, Sir John Northcott, and family.

WHEN Governor-in-Chief Arthur Phillip arrived to found the Port Jackson settlement in 1788 he established Australia's first Government House in a canvas hut which cost £125.

The hut stood near what would be to-day the middle of Bridge Street.

Phillip soon had ideas for a more imposing residence. In his original plans it was to have been built on the site now occupied by the Red Cross Blood Bank, formerly Petty's Hotel, near the southern approaches to Sydney Harbor Bridge.

The canvas hut was later replaced by a building, and historical notes say that this building was sufficiently completed on June 4, 1789—George the Third's birthday—to receive Phillip's guests "with as much formality as the occasion required."

The building went up close to where the hut stood.

Phillip entertained officers at a dinner in the new premises and later

they attended the first play staged in Australia, "The Recruiting Officer," which was performed, in all probability, in the old canvas house 350 feet nearer the Tank Stream.

There were building difficulties in those days, too. In a letter despatched to the Home Authorities in March, 1793, Phillip deplored the lack of limestone, which obliged him to keep the building only 12ft. high.

However, limestone was later found nearby in the Domain, and quarrying began for the erection of the present Government House.

This building was commenced in 1837. On June 26, 1845, the housewarming coincided with the celebration of the anniversary of Queen Victoria's accession and coronation.

The site chosen was at an equal distance between the Government stables, which are now demolished, and the then Fort Macquarie.

Col. George Barney and Mr. Mortimer Lewis were the principal advisers to the Home Government, and they furnished the design at an approximate cost of £15,000. It was found that at least £25,000 would be required because of the extra cost



GOVERNOR OF NEW SOUTH WALES, Lieut.-General Sir John Northcott, and his daughter, Miss Elizabeth Northcott, who, owing to Lady Northcott's ill-health, acts as her father's hostess.

Vice-Regal residence is a link with Colonial past

of lead and iron and the high rate of wages.

Good joiners were then paid 7/- a day, masons 8/- to 10/- a day, painters 5/9, and plasterers 6/-.

The building was designed by E. Blore, of London, and it was erected under the supervision of Mr. Lewis, who was the Colonial Architect at the time.

It was commenced during the regime of Sir Richard Bourke, but Sir George Gipps was the first Governor to reside there.

For many years Government House, Sydney, was used for the Governors-in-Chief, Lieut.-Governors, Administrators, and Governors-General.

Admiral Sir Harry Holdsworth Rawson, Baron Chelmsford, and Sir Gerald Strickland resided at "Cranbrook."

After the appointment of the Earl of Hopetoun as first Governor-General, in 1900, "Cranbrook," a lovely old mansion on New South Head Road, Rose Bay, was bought by the Government as a residence for the State Governor.

In 1913 the Government also purchased "Wotonga," on Kirribilli Point, as a home for British Admirals who came to Australia with the British Fleet, and renamed it "Admiralty House."

When Government House reverted to being a State Governors' residence, Admiralty House became a home for Governors-General. Lord Denman and Lord Stonehaven were both in residence there.

Government House, Canberra, or "Yarralumla," as it is known, was not bought until 1927.

Other Vice-Regal establishments in N.S.W. have been the historic house at Windsor erected by Governor Hunter about 1794, and also the house at Parramatta (or Rose Hill) built in 1790.



DRAWING-ROOM opens into the ballroom at one end and through an arch into a smaller reception-room connected with dining-room.



DINING-ROOM at Government House as it appears when only the family are in residence. The small table is replaced by a larger one for entertaining. Portraits of former Governors who resided at Government House are hung in the dining-room.



RECEPTION HALL. The gracious hallway was recently redecorated for the Royal visit. The reception-rooms lead off from the right, and to the left are the Governor's office and staff offices. Pictures on these two pages are by staff photographer Bob Cleland.



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"Woik, woik, woik. It's all you ever think of."

It seems to me

FROM a couple of letters in the mail this week, it looks as if I have misled some readers.

Because of some references in this column to bulb growing, they are under the impression that I rush home from the office every evening to distribute snail bait on a 60-foot frontage.

The fact is that I own seven window-sill potplants (four of them rather mangy) and two ex-sugar-basins containing hyacinths.

Nevertheless, in spite of this limited field, my favorite week-end reading is the gardening columns.

I devour every bit of them, right down to such queries as: "My magnolia was doing fine until last month, when it developed a wilted condition resembling screaming-meemies. What should I do?" (Signed) E. J. Pymble.

And the answer: "From your description, this disease is more probably heeby-jeebies, which is incurable. Chop down the tree, dig a large hole, and jump into it."

THIS preoccupation with gardening lore springs from the natural female desire to get a word into conversations.

In the circles I move in, I find that otherwise it would be necessary to be silent for quarter-hours at a time, which is very trying.

One woman I know, who until recently distributed her weekly pay envelope among the better-class milliners, now squanders a fortune on chocolate loam and sulphate of ammonia.

And at a recent party I attended a husband and someone else's wife were deep in such earnest conversation in a dim corner of the room that several knowing winks were exchanged by other guests. You can imagine the disappointment when, during a lull in the noise, the girl's voice rang out loud and clear: "Oh, blood and bone. I always say there's absolutely nothing like blood and bone!"

In order to shine at such gatherings, I find it useful to be able to recite, for example, a recipe for Bordeaux mixture.

You might think it would be easier to change the subject. If so, you don't know gardeners.

ONE of our representatives was in Townsville last week on a notable day—the first day that the North Queensland Tobacco Growers' Co-operative Association put its cigarettes on the market.

She tells us that the customary form of northern greeting, "Have a drink?" was replaced for the day by "Have a cigarette?"

At the hotel where she stayed, local residents offered them to visitors with the proud comment, "It will be some time before they're on the market down south."

She sent us a couple of packets and the more artistic members of the staff immediately started to argue about the packaging. Some considered it drab, others attractive.

But the artistic ones didn't care. What impressed them was to think of cigarettes being offered round in open-hearted abandon, and accepted, just like pre-war days.

By



Dorothy Drain

AMERICAN political writers say that television could have a big influence on this year's presidential elections.

They claim that the candidate's appearance matters more than ever before and that Eisenhower's pleasant personality played a part in his victory as Republican nominee.

Television is so much more intimate than the picture theatre. It brings the candidate into the home—and every girl who has ever brought a young man home knows how searching is the scrutiny of the family entrenched in its own sitting-room.

With the candidate—as with the young man—it doesn't matter if he's not downright handsome, but it helps if he has a "nice face."

Television is merciless to sloppy dress. It even shows up such signs of carelessness as dandruff on the shoulders.

This is a problem that will one day be real to Australian politicians. One imagines a wife brushing her husband's coat, straightening his tie, and saying, "And for goodness sake take that sour look off your face. Practise keeping your mouth up at the corners."

It might be all to the good.

A FRENCH correspondent in Australia has been writing articles about this country for his newspaper, "Le Figaro."

In one article, says a Paris cable, he reports that a Sydney man told him that you could leave your valise on a park bench and find it there three days later, unless the police had taken it to the lost property office.

Among the snippets of history I enjoyed as a child were stories of the reign of good King Alfred. In those days, so my history book said, a man might leave a bag of gold beside the road for months and recover it untouched.

I liked that story. I always believed it. But now, after hearing the same thing about Sydney, I can't help feeling a bit disillusioned.

THE Stratford-on-Avon Council has decided to have nightly variety shows in the town. Formerly the only live theatre was Shakespeare. The Council was told the "citizens were tired of living with Shakespeare's spirit day and night."

Culture is fine and dandy, especially for those who care.

It's an ornament to a woman, it gives her a dignified air.

It's popular worn like perfume, a gentle, delicate touch.

But some folk, it must be admitted, feel you can have too much.

And just as it is with a woman, so it can be with a town.

Whose people find culture a burden, a dubious kind of crown.

"The tourists," they say, "may like it, when they pause for a while as they roam."

"But they don't have to live with it always, they needn't be highbrow at home."



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KEEP SOFTASILK IN YOUR BEDROOM... YOUR BATHROOM... YOUR KITCHEN

U.S. fashion girl's career

Her jobs have taken her around the world

By BETTY BEST, staff reporter

A girl who says she still "doesn't know where she's going" but who has travelled a very long way since she left home at 17 is American fashion stylist Nancy Spowart, now in Australia.

AT 24 Nancy has travelled over the greater part of America and Europe, worked with and visited leading fashion centres in New York, London, and Paris, and is taking a few weeks' holiday here.

A fresh-faced, auburn-haired girl with a liberal sprinkling of freckles and an engaging smile, Nancy has had many jobs which have led to the one she has now—as fashion stylist with a famous American women's magazine.

"When I tell you how I became a stylist you'll think I'm just a gal who couldn't stick to anything," she said to me.

"But you see I just don't believe that to get anywhere you've got to stay in one job and slave and slave for years."

"That way I'd still be a style scout sent out to sketch someone else's ideas when they weren't looking."

"That was my first job. I had to run all over the town looking for new stuff and making quick, under-the-lap sketches of anything I saw which I thought might be news."

"The organisation I worked for advised stores throughout the country on their buying."

"After six months I got the urge to move on."

Nancy comes from Michigan, in the Middle West.

She majored in Arts in Detroit High School, but left academic education behind at 17.

"Just like any other kid who wants to leave home, I had trouble persuading my parents that it would be O.K. for me to go to New York by myself," she said.

"They made the one condition that I must live in a girl's residential until I finished my two years at fashion school."

"That way they thought I'd be under strict control like that at home."

"If only they could have seen the way we climbed in and out of windows in that hostel I guess they might have changed their minds."

"Some people thought I was crazy to leave that first job, but I just knew it was time to learn something else," she said.

Her next job was with a trade paper which reported on all hat news from the most exclusive salons to "cheap little dives."

Next came six months in an exclusive New York store.

Then Nancy and four of her friends, who had shared a New York apartment, packed their bags and set out for California.

"We had no jobs to go to and I spent quite a time



FASHION STYLIST Nancy Spowart wears a grey wrap-over frock, white waffle pique dicky, and grey-and-white Juliet cap in soft felt and pique. She makes all her own clothes from the patterns she sponsors.

pounding the pavements of Los Angeles before I found one as a fabric stylist," she said.

Twice a year Nancy was sent to New York, and that gave her a thirst for travel.

She saved up for a trip to Europe and in eight weeks saw London, Scotland, and most of the Continent.

"I found that I did it all easily on under a thousand dollars—and travelled in the Queen Mary and the Queen Elizabeth too," she said.

As a magazine fashion stylist, Nancy has the whole of the West Coast of the U.S. as her territory, and she arranges fashion shows in two department stores in big cities every week.

She always wears style sponsored by her magazine and makes all her clothes.

I asked Nancy where she most wanted to get in her career.

She laughed heartily. "You should have guessed by now that I don't know," she said.

More about Mr. Blandings

"Blandings' Way," sequel to the hilarious best-selling novel "Mr. Blandings Builds His Dream House," will be published in our issues of August 6 and August 13 in the form of two books.

IN "Blandings' Way" author Eric Hodgins traces the events which forced Mr. Blandings to relinquish his dream house.

"The problems that bedevilled poor Blandings were once my own," Eric Hodgins told Peter Hastings of our New York staff.

But there are some differences between Blandings and creator Hodgins. Blandings is a rising advertising executive who has worked all his life in an advertising agency.

Hodgins has never worked in an agency, but in a 25-year career with some of America's leading magazines (where he held top jobs) he often handled advertising affairs and so came to know not one but dozens of Blandings'.

Eric Hodgins, born in Detroit, has had an amazingly varied career which has reflected his amazingly varied talents. Educated in Anglican

schools in New York, he took a chemical engineering degree at the famed Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1922.

Between 1922 and 1933 he collaborated with a number of authors in a series of entertaining, well-written books on popular science.

In 1933 he was appointed associate editor of "Fortune" magazine, a post which gave full scope to his extensive knowledge of the complex problems of business, economics, and international industry.

In 1936 Henry Luce offered him the post of vice-president of "Time" magazine, a job which he held until he retired in 1946. He has also been editor-in-chief of "McCall's" and managing editor of "The Redbook."

Hodgins is married and has two children, a 19-year-old son at Harvard and an eight-year-old daughter "who claims far more of my time, because

she knows she can get it, than I have any right to allow her."

In recent years Hodgins' wide abilities have been recognised by two U.S. Presidents, the late Franklin D. Roosevelt and Mr. Truman. At President Roosevelt's insistence Eric Hodgins served on various Government Boards, including the important wartime Manpower Commission.

More recently, at President Truman's request, he served on the President's Materials Policies Commission.

While he regards his presidential and government work as his number-one interest, he retains a fond memory of the trials and problems of writing "Blandings," seeing it become an overnight best-seller and a top box-office attraction as the film which starred Cary Grant and Myrna Loy.

"Many people come to me," said author Hodgins, "to tell me that having read 'Bland-



MR. ERIC HODGINS, author of "Blandings' Way," sequel to "Mr. Blandings Builds His Dream House." "Blandings' Way," book one, will appear in our next issue. Book two will be published the following week.

ings' they are too terrified to try to build their own homes."

"My answer is always to tell them to go ahead, that they'll have a lot of fun, and that, in any case, they have only their bank account to lose."

Retired horses find their dream home

An equine paradise of apples and loaf sugar

To retire from the hurly-burly of city traffic to a quiet bit of green countryside is the vain dream of many an urban human. It's a dream that has come true for 18 of Sydney's brewery-waggon horses who had worked in that traffic for most of their lives.

Big, strong, and highly intelligent animals, many of these horses were more than 20 years old when they retired nine months ago. All had a record of faithful service.

BEFORE I went to see how two of them were getting on in retirement I interviewed Tom Bowen, their former stable manager and friend for nearly half a lifetime. He still talks proudly of their moments of heroism.

"I'll never forget the day when Peg was one of the horses drawing a waggon down Hunter Street hill and the brakes failed," said Tom.

"It was a procession, and I had 20 people on that waggon—most of them kids.

"When the grease on the road got on to the wheels the brakes couldn't grip and the waggon started on a mad skid down the hill.

"I don't mind telling you I was scared. We might all have been killed. It was enough to make the calmest horse panic.

"But not Peg.

"She just leant her rump against the waggon with all her might.

"It needed all her strength to do it, but she got us down to Pitt Street and on to the flat before she let up."

It's not surprising that Peg is Tom Bowen's favorite.

Eighteen years ago she won a bet for him. He had gone to Adelaide for the agricultural show and met an owner who had entered three white Percherons in the three-year-old fully event.

The owner asked Tom which he liked, and he picked Peg. "She'll get third prize," said the owner. "The other two will beat her hollow."

Tom bet five whiskies on his choice, and won.

"If a man can't pick 'em when he's had ponies of his own since he was 15, there'd be something wrong," he explained.

Four years later Tom met Peg again.

Toobey's Brewery, whose greys had been famous since the turn of the century, bought eight Percherons from an Adelaide stud, and Peg was among them.

She was seven years old then, and within a few months of her arrival she had a pitch-black foal.

All pure-bred Percherons are born black. It takes six years for them to attain the distinctive white coat.

Flo was Peg's last foal. The rest of her working life was so busy that she had no time for domesticity.

Peg is now the pride and joy of the Girls' Training School at Thornleigh, N.S.W.

She has her own private stable, an acre or two of ground to wander over as she pleases, and a host of girls to pet her morning, noon, and night.



FOND PAT from Christopher Hasler, 12, of Charleville, Queensland, makes Whisky feel at home in his new surroundings at St. Ignatius' College, Riverview, N.S.W. Being an affectionate horse, Whisky likes plenty of attention.

In this, her 21st year, she is having her first lesson in growing old gracefully.

And the girls help. They spend their spare time grooming her and bringing her apples and sugar lumps.

Once, on an official visiting day, Peg suffered the agonising embarrassment of being discovered with pins in her hair.

The girls had set her mane in bobby-pins to fit the gala day and hadn't expected the visitors so early.

They were most disappointed to find that horsehair responded less kindly than their own to the treatment.

At St. Ignatius' College, Riverview, N.S.W., lives an even older member of Tom Bowen's stable.

This is 22-year-old Whisky, a bay gelding only 154 hands high, one of the smallest horses Tom ever had.

Whisky is remarkably youthful and looks only half his age.

Country boys boarding at the school are particularly

enthusiastic about him and say that having a horse round the place makes it "just like home."

Now, Whisky's hardest work is to take a load of soil to the cricket pitches on the school oval—twice a week at the most.

But till last year he had been one of the busiest horses in the city since he joined Tom Bowen's stable in 1936.

"You could do anything with Whisky," Tom told me.

"He would work equally well in a single or six-horse waggon.

"Anyone could drive him—or ride him for that matter.

"He is a grand little horse and a terrific worker."

Whisky was the horse that every driver liked.

Whenever one of the other horses needed a rest, Whisky would step into the gap.

"The funny thing was that he never seemed to need a rest himself," said Tom.

"I hope he's not bored now he has so little to do."

WHEN CHILDREN "DRAG" AROUND



When children are fussy and pick at their food, they are not getting the most good from the food you supply. They tend to tire easily... fall behind.



Children need certain essential nutritional elements to give them full joyous vitality. They need EXTRA nourishment to build up reserves of stamina.

To supply the essential nutrients your children need every day, give them Horlicks. Made with milk, Horlicks guards against "Hidden Hunger".

Guard "HIDDEN HUNGER" in your home!

Doctors and Nutrition Experts agree that "Hidden Hunger" is far more common than most people realise. They say you can satisfy your hunger by having three meals every day—and still not satisfy your body's needs. When we eat the wrong kind of foods, or not enough of the right kind, then we suffer from "Hidden Hunger"... our body is still hungry for certain essential food elements.

Horlicks supplies balanced nutrition... made with milk, it guards against "HIDDEN HUNGER"



You must have nourishing food to guard against "Hidden Hunger." However, with to-day's rising costs, it is not always possible to have the RIGHT kind of foods your body needs. That is why Horlicks is so necessary in your home—for all your family. Horlicks contains full-cream milk and the

nutritive extracts of wheat-flour and malted barley. Prepared with milk and enjoyed between meals and just before bed at night, Horlicks is a balanced food which supplies the essential nutritional elements your body needs every day to guard against "Hidden Hunger."



Made with milk
HORLICKS
guards against
"HIDDEN HUNGER"
(Copyright)

P.S.—Hot Horlicks before bed induces deep, restful sleep.

H2-B



ACROSS THE PADDOCK (above) Peg draws a wagonload of girls at Thornleigh, N.S.W., with the style which made her a glamor girl in her working days. At right: Peg submits to an outdoor grooming from the girls beside the duck pond at Thornleigh, knowing that there will be an apple for her afterwards.

GOR-RAY

REGD

Skirts one better!

When you shop, ask for Gor-Ray, and—although we are still not allowed to import enough Gor-Ray skirts to satisfy the great demand—it's more than a lucky chance you'll find one.

GREY?... TITIAN?... BLONDE?... BRUNETTE?

HIGHLIGHT YOUR HAIR TO NEW BEAUTY

with a **NAPRO**
HI-LITER
Colour Shampoo

So easy to have hair lovelier than ever before. Just one home treatment with a Napro Hi-Liter Colour Shampoo and even the most "lack-lustre" hair sparkles with new radiant highlights. Napro Hi-Liter Shampoos are *not* dyes or bleaches and are as simple to use as an ordinary shampoo. Economical, too—a bottle will last you for months.

NAPRO *Silver Grey* HI-LITER

Wonderful news for every woman with grey hair! Silver Grey Hi-Liter Colour Shampoo brings thrilling even-toned loveliness. One quick shampoo will charm away yellow streaks... impart an exquisite blue toning, the depth of which you can control exactly. Your friends and family will be delighted with the silvery moonlight effect. Try Silver Grey Hi-Liter once and you'll know that grey hair can be an asset to beauty.



NAPRO *Titian* HI-LITER

For every shade of hair... this wonder Hi-Liter Colour Shampoo. See the way hair really glows with warm, coppery brilliance after one simple home treatment.

NAPRO *Gold* HI-LITER

Fair or brown hair gleams with breathtaking golden highlights after just one shampoo with Napro Gold Hi-Liter. So easy to use, too—as simple as giving yourself an ordinary shampoo!



NAPRO **HI-LITER** *Colour Shampoos*

SILVER GREY
for silvery moonlight sheen
GOLD
for golden gleam
TITIAN
for warm, coppery tints



AVAILABLE AT ALL STORES, CHEMISTS AND BEAUTY SALONS

Worth Reporting

A DELIGHTFULLY written and illustrated children's history book, "The Australia Book" has been produced by two Sydney women.

The idea for this book was born about eight years ago, when well-known children's writer Eve Pownall decided that children would enjoy learning Australian history much more if it were presented in a bright, easy-to-read manner.

The Australian Book Society awarded first prize to Mrs. Pownall for the unpublished manuscript about five years ago.

When the firm of John Sands decided to publish the book, Mrs. Pownall met Englishwoman Margaret Senior, who was to illustrate it, and they began a long collaboration.

"Our conferences at Eve's home over endless cups of tea formed the basis for a firm friendship," Mrs. Senior told us.

Mrs. Senior spent months working in the Mitchell Library so that her illustrations would be accurate in every detail.

Mrs. Pownall told us that at first she wondered how an Englishwoman, comparatively new to this country, could get the real feeling of Australian history into her illustrations.

"Actually she was the best possible person for the job," Mrs. Pownall said. "She brought the eye of the pioneer to it, and things we take for granted she finds dramatic."

The story and illustrations are closely interwoven and cover the saga of Australia's history from pre-Captain Cook days right up to modern times.

"The Australia Book" has been released in time for Children's Book Week, which begins on August 11.

Martin Place spiders may be upset

OUR hair stood on end when we were told recently that a horde of angry spiders was marching on Sydney.

According to our informant, the blasting and drilling in the underground railway workings in Martin Place had disturbed the spiders in that locality so much that they were making a mass exodus.

One unsuspecting woman who strayed into their path, we were told, was bitten twice by a furious arachnid.

Before giving way to panic, we rang Mr. Keith McKeown at the Australian Museum for an entomologist's views on this phenomenon.

We were delighted to hear that, in Mr. McKeown's opinion, there was only a remote possibility that Martin Place spiders would be upset by the noise.

We have, therefore, given up our first idea of leaving Sydney forthwith and are now merely keeping our weather-eye open for creepy-crawlies as we pass through the city.



"Income tax rap, eh? Collecting or evading?"

Pastor preached from Bounty Bible

THE only man to preach from the famous Bounty Bible since it was returned to Pitcairn Island two years ago was Mr. Fred Ward, who is now back in Sydney after 14 years on the island.

The Bible had been in America for 110 years, and, after being used for the one commemorative service, at which Mr. Ward preached, it was placed in a locked glass case.

When Mr. Ward, who is a Seventh Day Adventist pastor, and his wife left Pitcairn, the 125 islanders, many of them direct descendants of the mutineers, presented Mrs. Ward with a piece of wood cut from the Bounty wreck.

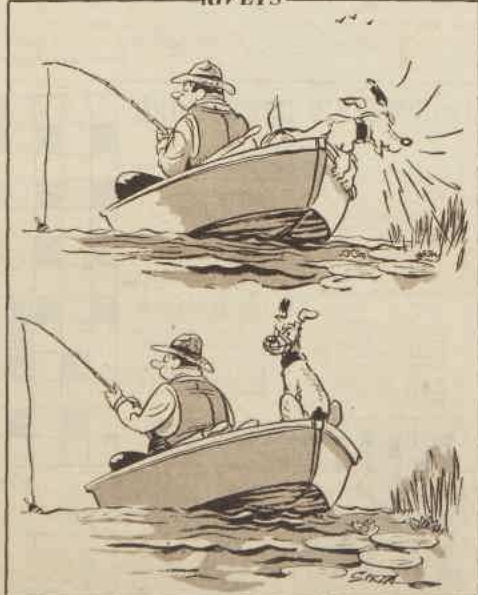
Collect coupons for a holiday

WE learnt the other day about a new company called "Travel on Terms," which operates just like the coupon-collecting schemes of years ago.

Housewives are encouraged to buy a variety of goods at certain shops which issue a travel coupon for each shilling spent. The coupons eventually mount up (if you're patient enough) to a free annual holiday.

Strangest shop to have been brought into the scheme up to date is a pawnbroker's.

RIVETS



Boys run their own "parliaments"

LAW-MAKING "parliaments," run by the boys themselves, are a feature of training methods at the Tally Ho Boys' Village in Melbourne.

The superintendent, Mr. Edgar Derrick, told us that the "parliaments," which meet weekly, have control of all disciplinary matters and have the power to impose fines on their members.

"We are training them to use freedom by giving them freedom," explained Mr. Derrick, who was in charge of the Australian contingent to the Boy Scouts' Jamboree in Austria last year.

"This system teaches the delinquent boy how he should behave and he is more inclined to adhere to standards set down by his own group."

The village, which has been in existence for 50 years, now has four new completely self-contained cottages, with 12 boys and a "mother" and "father" in each.

The new cottages will be officially opened by the Governor-General, Sir William McKell, on August 2.

The cottages, which are brightly decorated, are named after famous men whose characters are held up as examples to the boys.

MOST Australians visiting England gradually learn to stomach the average Englishman's indiscriminate use of the word "colonial" without losing their tempers.

It will come as a blow to their pride, however, to hear that in some legal circles in the old country this term is not just a slip of the tongue.

Word comes from our London office that the first Australian to be admitted to the English bar in the new reign, John X. O'Driscoll, was solemnly stated to be "a Q.C. of the Colony of New South Wales" in the notice of his admittance on view in the Middle Temple.

It takes more than SUDS ALONE
to get the whitest whites



PERSIL SUDS CONTAIN OXYGEN!
THAT'S WHY...

Persil
Washes
Whitest!



LISTEN TO *Jack Davey* IN
"GIVE IT A GO"
EVERY MONDAY NIGHT AT 8 P.M.

Peek Frean's Cream Wafers



Heavenly with Ice Cream

Delicious with Dessert



Delectable with after dinner Coffee

Tempting with Afternoon Tea



If you want to make a party absolutely perfect, serve Peek Frean's Cream Wafers. Everyone votes them heavenly with ice cream! These crisp and delicate wafers are quite unique in flavour and texture and are equally delicious when served with tea, coffee or for supper.

You'll find the fillings irresistible... such a rich and luscious chocolate cream, and such a light and tangy lemon. Or you may prefer the new vanilla? Ask your grocer or delicatessen for these wonderful wafers. You'll be really surprised and delighted by the number to the pound.



Peek Frean's
CHOCOLATE, LEMON AND VANILLA
CREAM WAFERS

Some of my patients

CANCER IS A SILENT ENEMY . . .

STIFF NECKS CAN BE DANGEROUS

I SAW Henry Street at our club a few nights ago and to my astonishment he refused to eat any supper. Henry of all people!

"I've lost interest in food," he said.

"Not a good idea," I said. "You're getting thin, too."

"My wife will agree with you there," he replied. "She says it's hardly worth while cooking for me."

After this conversation I wasn't surprised to see Henry and his wife in my surgery last night.

"I'll wait in the waiting-room," she said, "but make him tell you EVERYTHING."

He settled down in a chair opposite me and I said a little sternly, "Now, suppose you answer just a few questions and tell me for how long you've been off your food."

"It's about two months, I guess, but, of course, world conditions and trade are enough to make a man worry."

"Is it indigestion?"

"Perhaps you could call it that. It's more like an uncomfortable feeling in the upper part of my stomach nearly all the time; a little worse after I eat."

On examining him I could feel no swelling nor find anything to account for the loss of weight and appetite. His chest had been X-rayed in a mass X-ray at the office.

Henry has been a trusted friend of mine for many years and I could hardly bear to voice the unhappy suspicion I had as to his condition.

"An X-ray, a stomach test, and a blood count must be done at once," I insisted. "The fact that we did not find any growth does not mean that there isn't one, but it does mean that if you prove to have one you stand a fair chance of having it removed successfully."

"And if we find nothing?" he wanted to know.

"There are other tests, Henry, but if they are negative and we are still left with a reasonable suspicion, I would strongly advise an operation. It is often the only means of detecting it in time to save your life."

"If I had ever had any trouble before with my stomach there would be some sense in it," muttered poor Henry, "but I've always boasted that my digestion was as strong as a horse's."

"That doesn't influence my opinion, my boy. Have everything done and then let us discuss it again."

Cancer of the stomach is one of the commonest growths, more usual in men than in women, and only about 10 per

By
A DOCTOR

cent. occurs in those who have previously had ulcers. Of late years it has been considered one of the complications of pernicious anaemia.

Too often, however, it shows no definite signs until it has irretrievably claimed its victim. Every person over 40 who develops digestive symptoms for the first time should be X-rayed.

MRS. MACSMITH brought her small daughter, Georgina, to see me because she was complaining of a stiff neck.

The little girl told me it had been stiff since the day before and I could see it was painful for her to move her head.

When I examined her I found she had enlarged glands both behind her jaw and in the back of her neck. I then looked at her throat and found the culprits—two enlarged tonsils covered in flecks of pus.

"These are quite sufficient to account for her trouble," I said, preparing a throat swab.

"We'll put you to bed, Geor-

gina, and you'll have something to make you better."

I told her mother to quarantine Georgina from the other children in the family.

"I'm so relieved," said Mrs. MacSmith. "I was terrified I might be polio."

"It's surprising," I told her, "how little disability a severely inflamed throat can cause, but the consequences of this can be just as bad as the results of polio, and even worse."

A sore throat may be associated with ear trouble, it may usher in rheumatic fever with heart trouble, or it may lead to permanent kidney damage.

"On no account treat lightly. Keep her in bed until I say she can get up."

"Daddy has a stiff neck, too," said Georgina proudly.

"Of course," interrupted Mrs. MacSmith. "I meant to tell you he is coming in to see you to-night."

"His neck was stiff and sore this morning. It may only be fibrositis, but it may have been jarred in a car collision he was in last night."

I arranged with Mrs. MacSmith for her husband to have an X-ray of his neck and to bring the plates when he came to see me that night.

Two stiff necks in one family at the same time was quite a coincidence.

No stiff neck can be assumed to be of minor importance, even if fibrositis is affecting a large number of the community.

The history of injury is most important. Even what is apparently a trivial injury is jarring has been known to cause a partial dislocation of the neck, and the damage resulting therefrom may be permanent if not treated correctly at once.

Hence the necessity for early X-ray.

All names are fictitious and do not refer to any living person. We regret our doctors cannot answer inquiries.

THIS WEEK'S CROSSWORD

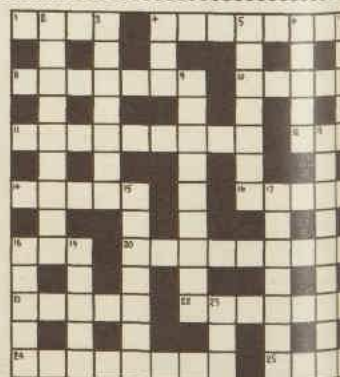
ACROSS

- Trade centre through which a public passenger car comes back. (4)
- Short love poem composed mainly by an insane Baltic city? (8)
- Calm a donkey and you with age. (7)
- Grown to be wicked. (5)
- He who asserts a claim is not unknown in England's history, be he young or old. (9)
- It's a factum if Friday follows. (3)
- Bubbles which can be sad. (5)
- Direction inside out. (5)
- Greek letter. (3)
- Nonsense user. (Anagr. 9)
- You may utter this extent when attacked by a savage dog? (5)
- Meals about gone by times. (7)
- Clockwork models of the planetary system. (8)
- Boy's name but can be anybody if followed by Harry. (4)



Solution to last week's crossword.

Solution will be published next week.



DOWN

- Rising exigent donkey. (9)
- Edward is full of corrosion but is relied upon. (7)
- Study hard with a drinking vessel. (3)
- Raw red. (Anagr. 7)
- Smarten a newswind. (5)
- The French with a turned horse lying on the bed of the sea as wreckage. (5)
- A round eye. Did she arrive with Captain Cook? (Anagr. 9)
- Such stroke is parallel of 22min. south. (9)
- She starts protection. (7)
- Fruit garden, likely for some time because the end is not soft. (7)
- Eat or become a Muse. (3)
- Axle, but you can make it a sharp retreat. (5)
- Entirely containing Japanese money. (3)

Carnations

● On Tamborine Mountain, 36 miles from Brisbane, George Purdy, a former R.A.A.F. squadron-leader, is growing some of the biggest and most beautiful carnations in Australia.



SUPERB BLOOMS. Mr. George Purdy cuts carnations for market. Stem length is 2ft. 6in.

By SARA STRAMBERG, staff reporter

BEFORE the war George Purdy had a copra plantation in the New Hebrides. He and his wife lived in Nduli Nduli, Aoba, about 22 miles from Lolowai, where the Melanesian Mission has a station.

In 1939 they went to Brisbane where George enlisted in the Air Force. It was during a visit to Tamborine Mountain in those days that they saw the possibilities of the house in which they now live.

After the war George decided to cultivate flowers instead of copra. His mother-in-law, Mrs. M. M. Carter, of Clayfield, Queensland, a keen gardener, gave him the idea of growing carnations.

At first, George had losses and difficulty with irrigation and windbreaks. The wet season last year caused disease and rotted many of the plants.

Water for irrigation still has to be pumped up in hoses to a small reservoir below the carnation patch.

The plants have been in full production only during the past six months.

Two years ago, while Mrs. Carter was in England visiting another son-in-law and daughter, Sir John and Lady Knight, at their home in Penham, Sussex, she took note of outstanding carnations at the Chelsea Flower Show and in carnation shows.

She sent out a list of names and colors and George Purdy placed his orders in England.

Six hundred plants arrived in the first shipment, and 400 of them survived. To-day there are two acres of plants in the garden.

New plants are flown out from England from time to time.

THE AUSTRALIAN WOMEN'S WEEKLY - July 30, 1952



BUDS FOR CUTTING. Blooms (above) are gathered early in the morning. Buds in this picture were ready for cutting on the following day.



DIFFERENT VARIETIES. A close-up of some of the carnations shows their size and vivid coloring.



LAVENDER is the name of the carnation above, Mrs. Purdy's favorite.

she says jokingly, in which one will be named after her.

George Purdy has more than 100 varieties of carnations. Many of the blooms are five inches across—enormous in comparison with the average bloom, which is between three and four inches wide.

One carnation was so big that the Purdys nicknamed it "King Kong." They considered it for some time, decided it was too gross, and struck off the royal head.

The Tamborine carnations are in demand throughout Australia.

Photographs on this page were taken by Lionel Keen.



ARMFUL OF FLOWERS. Mrs. George Purdy with some of the carnations grown by her husband on Tamborine Mountain.

HOW TO KEEP YOUR KISS A SECRET!



Colour that doesn't come off...

when you kiss, when you eat, when you smoke! Cashmere Bouquet

Colourfast lipstick stays on your lips without drying. The smooth ultra-creamy texture keeps your lips satin-soft and brilliantly lovely at all times.

Cashmere Bouquet
COLOURFAST
LIPSTICK

1. Dry lips with a tissue
2. Apply Colourfast to upper lip
3. Compress lips and blend Colourfast on lower lip
4. Blot on tissue and dust lightly with face powder
5. Moisturize lips and your Colourfast stays lovely for hours!

A little
self-care
stops a lot of
backache



The body's wonderful self-cleansing system depends on the kidneys to filter impurities and waste matter from the bloodstream. When, through faulty kidney action, these harmful impurities accumulate the result is often backache, symptoms of rheumatism or joint and muscle pains.

So it is very wise to take a few De Witt's Pills occasionally, because this good diuretic is specifically to stimulate sluggish kidneys to function in a normal, healthy way. They also have a soothing cleansing effect on the urinary channels.

De Witt's Pills have been helping men and women in this way for more than 60 years. See for yourself the good effect a course of De Witt's Pills can have on your general health and fitness.

Get a supply today, prices 3/6 and 6/6.

DeWitt's
PILLS

The effective formula is clearly printed on every packet of De Witt's Pills

AS she closed the bedroom door, she could hear down the hallway her mother's feather-light special social voice holding Howard in polite conversation and her father's forthright interruptions whenever her mother uttered some unforgivable absurdity.

Ginny hesitated in the doorway, swallowing her breath and closing her eyes for one long moment before she moved into the room. Howard got up and she stared at him helplessly. Though she had met him on two occasions, he appeared to her an utter stranger.

In her dismay all she could think of to say was a trite, "I hope I haven't kept you waiting."

"Not at all," he replied over-politely. "I was early."

Ginny said quickly, "Shall we go?"

Howard had hired a car for the duration of his leave. It was shabby and cramped and the gears and steering were unfamiliar to him so that he fumbled the start. They sat in complete silence until Ginny could bear it no longer. "It was nice of Kitty to ask you to bring me, too."

"Not at all," he said dutifully. "I hope it won't be too deadly."

Ginny gave him an unhappy, sideways glance. He was so remote. "Have you," she said fumblingly, "been enjoying your leave?"

"Nothing special," he said. "Mostly relations."

"I see." She could think of nothing else to say. She stood on the steps of the Blairs' house, wishing devoutly that she were on her way home instead of just arriving.

There was really nothing tangible of which she could complain in Howard's manner. He danced with her, conversed conscientiously on the correct topics, and saw she had a drink when she needed one.

When the time came for them to have supper from the cold buffet set out in the dining-room, he guided her to a chair and, having asked her what she would like to eat, left her to get it.

She followed his back through the crowd with a weary glance of disillusionment. He was the image of the man for whom she had left her family, lived with in a strange and frightening land, and seen die at her feet—and for her he felt nothing at all.

She wondered why, if his feelings were so negative towards her, he had bothered to ask her to come to the party with him. Probably Kitty had been responsible for that, suggesting her name as a suitable girl with no attachments.

It was a painful moment, unmitigated by the half-acknowledged fact that it had happened many times before. Once more the wild horses had led her on a joyride that had ended decisively in just nothing at all.

"Lost something?" a voice asked at her elbow.

Her eyes showed alarm. "No, why?"

The room, according to a whimsy of Kitty's, was lighted inadequately by flickering candles. Their light revealed a tall young man, a glass in his hand, a quizzical smile on his face.

"You looked so unhappy I couldn't bear it a moment

Girl With A Gift

Continued from page 4

longer. You're Virginia Forester, aren't you? I'm John Eldridge. I met you once before at one of Kitty's parties in this house, but you don't remember me, do you?"

"I've no memory at all for faces or names. It's terrible," she apologised.

"Is somebody fetching you some supper, or can I do something about it?"

"No, Howard Tracey's getting me something to eat."

"In that case," he said, "do you mind if I wait here until the crush round the buffet has thinned a bit?"

"Hi, you two, why don't you go and get yourselves something to eat," Kitty called out as she went past them. She carried a lighted candle in each hand to replace two on the mantelpiece.

"Mind, Kitty!" Ginny shrieked suddenly. With a violent action she snatched the glass out of John Eldridge's hand and flung the contents over the lacy sleeve of an elderly woman whom Kitty was just passing.

Kitty turned round in blank astonishment. "Goodness, Ginny," she cried, "whatever's the matter with you?" She held the candles high above her head and looked with consternation at the soaked sleeve of her guest.

Ginny gulped and wished she could die. "Mrs. Thomas," she stammered, "I'm awfully sorry. I thought I saw the candle flame catch your sleeve—I was mistaken."

"It's quite all right," Mrs. Thomas said with a graciousness wholly false. "Has somebody a handkerchief or a cloth? I feel as if I've been drowned!"

A circle of helpers closed round her and Kitty went to place the candles firmly in their holders.

John Eldridge gave Ginny an amused glance. "Cheer up. There's no damage worth worrying about."

She was swamped in shame and confusion. "I thought her dress had caught fire—I could see the whole room ablaze," she said lamely.

"And every one of us a charred corpse," he finished for her.

She nodded.

"Do you know," he said, staring at her solemnly and rubbing his chin, "what your trouble is?"

"No." She looked a little startled, being unaware that she had any permanent trouble at all.

"You've too much imagination."

"What makes you say that? How can you possibly know?"

"Clear as mud," he said cheerfully. "But don't look so upset. It's nothing to worry about. It makes some people a darn good living—writing."

"I think you're joking," she said primly.

"I'm not." He was quite serious. "You see, I'm a literary agent, so I have a professional interest in young imaginations. Have you ever written anything?"

"No," she replied, with as much scorn as if he had asked her if she had swum the Channel. There was a moment's silence, and she took another look at him. Really rather nice, and his voice was wonderful, with a lilting chuckle buried in it somewhere. She smiled at him.

"What do you do for a living?" he asked.

"It's not very exciting really, but I like it. I'm learning to be a cook."

He looked at her in astonishment, a strong light of admiration and delight filling his eyes. "By all that's wonderful!" he said, with soft reverence. "All that imagination and you can cook, too."

She smiled shyly, feeling lit up inside with a delicious exhilaration. No one had ever thought anything about her wonderful before.

Somebody tugged his arm. "John, Stephen Meadows particularly wants to meet you. He does children's stuff."

He turned to Ginny. "Please don't move," he said. "Stay just there."

She nodded and sat waiting for him to return in that blessed state of peace that comes to those who have passed unscathed through great peril.

She had forfeited her rights for evermore in the heirloom, she had given away a perfectly

wearable skirt, she had mortgaged her Sunday morning and all her leisure for the next month. But what had she escaped! Exile, abandonment of Charlotte, not to speak of early widowhood. Her only emotion was one of blinding relief.

Ginny saw Howard coming towards her, a plate balanced carefully in each hand. How stiffly he walked, how unacquainted with smiles his face! He was a bore, rather a stupid bore, and wild horses wouldn't have dragged her marrying him.

In the few seconds that it took him to reach her side she emptied him out of her mind. Immediately it was filled by a picture of a thick brand-new novel, across the jacket of which stretched the banner of a famous book club. It was a best seller, the sales running up into millions.

The title was indistinct, but the author's name on the spine was her own, and the dedication inside read, "To J.E. with love."

(Copyright)

She Goes to Men's Heads!



The modern "Delilah" is Mrs. Zelvi Lindeman—men's hairdresser in a Bourke Street, Melbourne, barber's salon.

"I'd find women's hair-dressing dull after cutting men's hair," says Mrs. Lindeman, "but it's a more tiring job. Standing on a cold floor all day... close to coughs and colds... by lunch-time I'm more than ready for my hot Bonox! It gives me new strength—helps keep 'flu away! Whether you work indoors or out—get the Bonox habit this winter."

A steaming cup of delicious Bonox pours new strength straight into your bloodstream—helps keep your head above the 'flu line. Bonox is the concentrated goodness of rich, prime beef—plus peptones, to pop up your appetite. Cafeterias serve hot Bonox—so at home and at work, enjoy cheery, beneficial Bonox for a 1-i-f-t! Made by Kraft.

For your protection

On cuts and scratches, in the sick room from which infection may spread, for first aid and children's injuries, for feminine hygiene, use Dettol.

When you use Dettol you follow the example of most doctors, hospitals and nursing homes.



DETTOL

The Modern Antiseptic
OBTAINABLE FROM ALL CHEMISTS

THE AUSTRALIAN WOMEN'S WEEKLY—July 30, 1932

"QUIET MAN" IS LIVELY

★ Film stars, Abbey Theatre players, and ordinary citizens of County Mayo, Ireland, all have a whale of a time in John Ford's new farce "The Quiet Man." The film takes a humorous view of Irish marriage protocol in telling the story of a peace-loving American bridegroom who tries to settle down in a community which fights for the joy of it. An epic fist fight precedes the happy ending.

SEAN THORNTON (John Wayne), centre, the quiet man, mixes it with the fighting Dons — Mary Kate (Maureen O'Hara) and her bully brother "Red" Will (Victor McLaglen).



RURAL IRELAND is the scene of "The Quiet Man," a rollicking comedy about the wooing of fiery local beauty Maureen O'Hara by peace-loving prizefighter John Wayne, who returns from America to settle down in the little thatched cottage where he was born.



SILVER-TONGUED Michaelleen Flynn (Barry Fitzgerald) acts as village marriage broker when he isn't making a book on the horses. He arranges the marriage of Mary Kate and Sean.



PRETTY Mary Kate Danaher (Maureen O'Hara) is a spirited colleen who refuses to be a real wife to bridegroom Sean Thornton (John Wayne) until most of County Mayo has been fought over.

When...
Cupid starts to fire
his darts →→→



A ROMANTIC courtship, a lovely trousseau, a beautiful wedding and a wonderful honeymoon followed by a lifetime of happiness with her ideal man — these have been the dreams of girls throughout the ages.

The present day girl dreams along similar lines, but with her modern outlook on life she realises that the lovely trousseau, and the beauty and comfort of her first home depend on how well she regulates her spending, how carefully she saves.

The Commonwealth Savings Bank offers all young couples every encouragement and assistance to save for things that bring lasting happiness and ensure success in marriage.

If you are a modern girl in search of happiness, try saving something every pay day. You and your account are welcome at any branch of the

COMMONWEALTH Savings BANK

Accounts opened at any
Branch may be used anywhere in Australia when on holidays.

Beat Those Winter Blues with Eno of course

Cold, rain, changes of temperature when you leave the warmth of office or factory can all lead to winter ills and chills. Eno's "Fruit Salt," the ideal winter laxative, keeps you fit and helps your system resist these annoying ailments. Eno is the health drink of millions of people the world over because it helps them enjoy year-round health. Let Eno's "Fruit Salt," the gentle non-habit-forming laxative, turn your winter blues to winter health.



Eno's "Fruit Salt"

Sold in bottles
for lasting freshness

The words "Eno" and "Fruit Salt" are
registered Trade Marks.

EW 52/3

Talking of Films

By M. J. McMAHON

★ The Girl in White

M.G.M.'s "The Girl in White" is based on the career of Emily Dunning, who became the first woman to serve on the medical staff of a New York hospital.

Though it never throws off the sense of cinema, "The Girl in White" is pleasant enough entertainment, developing along conventional love versus career lines.

Young Emily Dunning is played first with fresh-faced enthusiasm by June Allyson, and later with earnest concentration, but one feels that she might burst into song.

Once she secures a hospital appointment, Emily soon wins over her male colleagues.

Arthur Kennedy and Gary Merrill perform workmanlike jobs as, respectively, Emily's true love and the hidebound hospital chief.

In Sydney—St. James.

★ Along the Great Divide

SAND and psychology are a heavy background for adventure in Warners' Western "Along the Great Divide."

The point of the tricky story appears to be that a sense of duty should be tempered with human understanding.

To illustrate this premise, Kirk Douglas is called upon to portray an arbitrary U.S. marshal who is also something of an emotional mess; Douglas is out of his depth in emotional scenes.

Cattle rustling and murder lead to an attempt being made to cross the desert by the marshal, accused murderer Walter Brennan, his hoydenish daughter Virginia Mayo, deputy John Agar, and other assorted characters.

They all have an arid time of it.

In Sydney—Park.

CITY FILM GUIDE

Films reviewed

CAPITOL.—★ "The Time, the Place, and the Girl," romantic comedy, starring Dennis Morgan, Jack Carson, Martha Vickers, Janis Paige. Plus "Nobody Lives For Ever," drama, starring John Garfield, Geraldine Fitzgerald. (Both re-releases.)

CIVIC.—★★★ "The Gunfighter," drama, starring Gregory Peck, Jean Parker. Plus "Slattery's Hurricane," drama, starring Richard Widmark, Linda Darnell. (Both re-releases.)

ESQUIRE.—★★★ "The Glass Menagerie," social drama, starring Jane Wyman, Kirk Douglas, Gertrude Lawrence, Arthur Kennedy. Plus featurettes.

LIBERTY.—★★★★ "Singin' in the Rain," technicolor musical comedy, starring Gene Kelly, Debbie Reynolds, Donald O'Connor, Jean Hagen. Plus featurettes.

LYRIC.—★★★★ "All Quiet on the Western Front," wartime drama, starring Louis Wolheim, Lew Ayres. Plus ★ "Meet the Ghosts, Abbott and Costello comedy. (Both re-releases.)

PARK.—★ "Along the Great Divide," Western, starring Kirk Douglas, Virginia Mayo, John Agar. (See review this page.) Plus "Embraceable You," romantic drama, starring Dane Clark, Geraldine Brooks. (Re-release.)

PRINCE EDWARD.—★ "Sailor Beware," comedy, starring Dean Martin, Jerry Lewis, Corinne Calvet. Plus featurettes.

REGENT.—★★★★ "A Streetcar Named Desire," social drama, starring Vivien Leigh, Marlon Brando, Kim Hunter, Karl Malden. Plus featurettes.

SAVOY.—★★★ "La Ronde," sophisticated French comedy, starring Danielle Darrieux, Anton Walbrook. Plus featurettes.

STATE.—★★★ "Where No Vultures Fly," technicolor African adventure, starring Anthony Steel, Dinah Sheridan, Harold Warrender. Plus featurettes.

ST. JAMES.—★ "The Girl in White," hospital drama, starring June Allyson, Arthur Kennedy, Gary Merrill. Plus ★ "Young Man With Ideas," romantic comedy, starring Glenn Ford, Ruth Roman, Nina Foch.

VARIETY.—★★★★ "The Third Man," drama, starring Orson Welles, Joseph Cotten, Valli. (Re-release.) Plus "Girl in a Million," comedy, starring Hugh Williams.

VICTORY.—★★★★ "They Were Not Divided," British wartime drama, starring Edward Underdown, Helen Cherry. Plus featurettes.

Films not yet reviewed

CENTURY.—"Phone Call From a Stranger," drama, starring Bette Davis, Gary Merrill, Shelley Winters, Keenan Wynn. Plus featurettes.

EMBASSY.—"Mr. Denning Drives North," drama, starring John Mills, Phyllis Calvert. Plus "Honeymoon Deferred," romantic comedy, starring Kieron Moore.

LYCEUM.—"The Magic Box," technicolor romantic drama, starring Robert Donat, Laurence Olivier, Margaret Johnson, and an all-star cast. Plus featurettes.

MAYFAIR.—"The Las Vegas Story," mystery drama, starring Jane Russell, Victor Mature. Plus "Eye Witness," mystery, starring Robert Montgomery.

PALACE.—"Girl in Every Port," comedy-farce, starring Groucho Marx, Marie Winsor, William Bendix. Plus "The Big Night," mystery, starring John Barrymore.

PLAZA.—"Come Fill the Cup," drama, starring James Cagney, Phyllis Thaxter, Raymond Massey. Plus featurettes.

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A SHAKESPEARE HEAD PUBLICATION



1 EXUBERANT Lotta Crabtree (Mitzi Gaynor) confides her love of the stage to her mother. Mrs. Crabtree (Una Merkel), a boarding-house keeper, is strongly against dancing and gambling.



2 BOY-FRIEND Mart (Dennis Day) yields to Lotta's persuasion and takes her to the Last Chance Saloon to see a stage star perform. There Lotta meets a handsome gambler and pretends to be a famous actress incognito.

GOLDEN GIRL . . .



3 GAMBLER Tom Richmond (Dale Robertson), making himself known, is attracted to Lotta.

LIGHT-HEARTED gaiety is the keynote of Fox's technicolor musical "Golden Girl."

Set in the days of the American Civil War, the film is a lively account of the life and times of Lotta Crabtree, who was a foremost woman entertainer in America last century.

The bubbling, high spirits of screen newcomer Mitzi Gaynor make her a happy choice for the role of vivacious Lotta Crabtree.

Attractive Dale Robertson and Dennis Day and veteran jack-of-all-theatre-trades James Barton provide humor and charm.



4 TRAVELLING troupe to raise money is formed by Mart, Mrs. Crabtree, and Lotta. Tom decides to follow them, while penniless Mr. Crabtree goes to San Francisco to find gold.



5 ACT is an immediate success and Lotta becomes a sought-after entertainer. Meanwhile, a series of armed hold-ups of Union Army gold shipments has the whole community agog to find the robber.



6 APPRECIATIVE audience includes Tom, who now realises he loves Lotta. When she discovers by accident that Tom is the bandit and in reality a captain in the Confederate Army, Lotta reiterates her love for him.



7 OFFICER of the Union Army asks Lotta to transport gold with her troupe to assure its safe arrival, since the bandit would not suspect a stage company. Then Tom comes under suspicion, but Lotta helps him escape.



8 REUNITED in San Francisco, when the war is over, through the efforts of Mr. Crabtree, Tom and Lotta decide to be married soon. Tom receives a pardon from the Union Army for the part he played in the war.

Give your 'Sweet Tooth'
a "Snack" today!



"Snack" An Assortment of 12
LUSCIOUS CHOCOLATES
IN ONE HANDY BLOCK



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A delicious taste-sensation of freshly-picked strawberries.

CREAM CARAMEL

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was ashamed . . .



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"You can't
look young
if your
hands
look
old"





ON THE COURSE. Audrey Inch, of Goulburn, and Mrs. K. R. Holy arrive at Grafton Racecourse for the Clarence River Jockey Club's two-day July Cup meeting. Blind soldier Bill O'Donnell, with his piano-accompanist, is a familiar sight on the course at every meeting.

Grafton Cup Races

GRAFTON'S famous jacarandas, although not yet in bloom, made a pretty setting for the Clarence River Jockey Club's July Cup meeting at the picturesque Grafton Racecourse.

The Jockey Club committeemen have called the meeting "a miniature Randwick," and it lived up to its name on Cup Day, when hundreds of people crowded the course.

Everyone cheered when the Grafton bred and trained horse Northern Warrior won the Grafton Cup. It was his fourth try, and the first time a local horse has won the Cup for 50 years.

For Grafton people, Cup Week, with its four days of racing, is a red-letter date in the year, when all the stores close for two half-holidays and the town lavishly entertains one of its biggest influxes of visitors. "We can almost date things 'before or after Cup Week,'" Club chairman Dr. Eric Holland told me.

WITH the temperature hovering around a sticky 74 degrees on the first day, the weather man caught nearly everyone in hotbox winter suits and coats. One who anticipated the day was Mrs. Syd Field, of "Gordonbrook," Copmanhurst. Mrs. Field wore a cool silk suit of navy-and-white spotted silk with a white pique hat trimmed with navy velvet ribbon. She pinned a home-grown pink camellia to her lapel.

Lumore visitor Mrs. Rowlie Longworth chose a trim grey wool frock and a sailor hat wreathed in scarlet cherries.

Mr. Robert Turnbull, of "Buccarambi," Grafton, wore a slate-blue suit and frothy white organdie jabot to match her white peaked Dutch bonnet.

AFTER Slander's popular win in the £400 Ramornie Handicap, everyone went on to after-race cocktail parties in jubilant spirits. There was soon a traffic jam of cars outside the home of Dr. Holland and his wife. They entertained visitors and the committee on the verandahs of their home, which overlooks the Clarence.

At South Grafton, Mr. W. Bailey Tart and his wife, who is the daughter of Sir Earle Page, dispensed hot rum punch to their guests. The younger set gathered at the L. J. Abrahams' lovely white brick home in Fry Street, where Judy, Marion, and David Abrahams entertained.

THERE was much consternation from the womenfolk on Cup Day when the forecast was "overcast, mist and fog, rain," and every word was true. The last three races were watched from under a forest of umbrellas.

Newlyweds David and Libbette Clark, who were married in Grafton recently, called in for the meeting en route to their home at "Waihora," Cunnamulla. They stayed with Libbette's parents, Mr. and Mrs. W. M. Hughes, of "Ramornie." The couple are caravanning their way to Cunnamulla, and will live in the caravan until their house, which was burnt down recently, is rebuilt. Libbette's brother, Lloyd, of Cunnamulla, will marry Colleen Shannon, of Mackay, in Brisbane on September 9. Her sister, Mrs. Don Parkinson, and husband, Cunnamulla, gave a party at "Girraween."



GRANDSTAND VIEW. Judy Page (top), Margaret Greenaway, Marion Abrahams, Margaret Lipman, and Diana Lindeman took up their positions on the grandstand early for a good view of the Grafton Cup, won by local horse Northern Warrior.



RAMORNIE DAY. Joel Schwinghammer (right), of Grafton, her fiance, Dr. Alton Cusick, of Newcastle and Pymble, and Judy Abrahams, who will be bridesmaid at their wedding in Sydney on September 23.



AT THE BALL. Dr. and Mrs. Bill Seales at the Matrons' Ball on Cup Night. Mrs. Seales wore a striking royal-blue taffeta sash on her white sharkskin frock. A cold chicken and champagne supper was served.



FROM MALAYA. Rod Whitaker, who has a rubber plantation at Kenta Valley, Batu Gajah, Malaya, talks with Mrs. J. M. Simpson (left), of "Willeroo," Inverell, and Mrs. Allan McArthur. Mr. and Mrs. Whitaker are on six months' leave.



PRESIDENT'S PARTY. President of Clarence River Jockey Club, Dr. Eric Holland (left), and Mrs. Holland welcome the president of Casino Jockey Club, Mr. Dan Kissane, and his wife.

LEARNT that hard-working, committeeman Dr. Norman Mulhearn, besides being a keen racing man, is an expert pilot, an authority on wood-carving, and a boat-builder. He built the champion sailing boat of the Clarence, which he named "Susan," after the daughter of his old friend, Mr. Justice Herron. Dr. Mulhearn, who is president of the Grafton Club, and his wife received many guests at the Club's traditional Cup cocktail party prior to the Matrons' Ball. Womenfolk always enter with a feeling of awe, as it is the one time in the year that they are allowed in the Club.

THE ball was a grand success and brought out some of the prettiest ball gowns of the season. Among them were Mrs. Derek Prentice's smoky-grey tulle frock with black and white lace bodice, and play-wright Barbara Woodward's dress of lilac lace with a two-tiered skirt tied with lilac velvet.

Pictures of famous racehorses decorated the walls of the ballroom, and balloons and streamers hung from the ceiling. Hostesses were Mesdames Doug Badgery, Derek Prentice, David Law, Cecil Lipman, Dr. W. Macpherson, Jack Kelly, Rick Snelling, and Milton Webber.



PICKING THE WINNERS. Peter Lindeman (left) and Wendy Thorburn, of Grafton, discuss their luck with Mr. and Mrs. Barry Adams, of "Pindoro," Inverell. After the races they went on to the younger set cocktail party given by Judy, David, and Marion Abrahams.

"YOU can't go wrong if you look to the classics," Mr. Justice Herron told me after Socrates had come home for him in the C.R.J.C. Handicap. The judge, who took his first law circuit in Grafton, was torn between attending the meeting and sneaking off to Armidale to watch the Fijian Rugby Union team play New England. He is N.S.W. Rugby Union president. The judge and his brother John, who attended with him, rarely miss a Grafton meeting.

FASHION honors go to 90-year-old Mr. Hugh Munro, of "Keera," Bingara, whose perfectly waxed moustache made him the most dapper man on the course. Mr. Munro had the wax sent specially from Paris. His son Gordon raced Bonnie Romance when she won the Grafton double last year. Also in the fashion running was committeeman Mr. W. T. Robinson with his tie of pink, blue, yellow, and green striped satin. Mr. Robinson started the "bright tie" week during the Grafton Jacaranda Festival.

Anne



RACING ENTHUSIASTS. Mr. Gordon Munro, "Keera," Bingara, Mrs. Janet Nivison, wife of the president of Walcha Jockey Club, Mr. Annie Lindeman, Mrs. Tom Ireland, "Nirra," Bingara, and Mr. Fred Whitaker, "Broadmeadows," Glen Innes, at the Hollands' party.

Eary Haden's Paris Notes



● Red suede and coarse unscoured white knitting wool are combined in a roomy long-sleeved ski-sweater, above.

● Gabardine ski-suit, right, has wide sleeves set in at the armholes with bands of knitting. The trousers are slim at the calves. Note small gaiter worn under trouser-legs, sketched below.



Trousers designed on tapering lines, the effect workmanlike and tailored, are featured on the snowfields this season.

Ski-jackets and sweaters with comfortably wide armholes are made in waterproofed fabrics, skin, fur, or artificial fur. Many of these jackets are finished at cuffs, waist, and neckline with contrasting bands of elasticised knitting.

Smart little caps showing the American baseball influence are the newest in headgear. They are a practical choice for protection against blizzards and cold winds.



● For skiing or after skiing, the pullover, above, is made in imitation leopard skin with black knitted wool bands at the neck, cuffs, and waistline.

On the Ski Line.



● Square-cut jacket, left, designed by Hermes, of Paris. The contrasting sleeves and hood are hand-knitted. Trouser-cuffs are lined with suede and fasten under the boots for skiing. See sketch below.



● Striped pullover with zipper fastening, above, is practical and smart for indoor or outdoor wear.



● Square silhouette is followed in the design above. The material chosen is tartan wool.



● Sweater with low turtle-neck, above right, is made in heavy white wool and looks equally chic with trousers or to top a vivid colored skirt.



● Brilliant felt skirt, right, is high fashion in America and on the Continent. The model has a braid trim and is worn with low-necked black sweater.

Dorothea Johnston

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malty

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The Far Country

Continued from page 10

ALL these things passed through Jane Dorman's mind as she sat sipping her tea in the kitchen of her home. Seven thousand pounds to spend after paying tax, all earned in one year and earned honestly, more money than her father had ever dreamed of earning, or any of her family.

Extraordinary to think of, and extraordinary that after their hard life the money should mean so little to them. Jack didn't quite know what to do with it, so much was evident, and certainly she didn't.

"I don't know about going home," she said at last. "I don't believe I'd know anybody there now except Aunt Ethel, and I don't suppose I'd recognise her now. There was a letter from her in the post to-day, by the way. I'd like to see the old thing again before she dies, but she's about the only one. She must be getting on for eighty now."

"Wouldn't you like to go and see your old home?" he suggested. He knew how much her mind had turned to that small country house when first she had come to Australia.

She shook her head. "Not now that it's a school. It would be all different. I'd rather remember it as it used to be."

Jack didn't press her; if she didn't want to go to England that was all right with him.

"There's another thing," he said. "About Mario. He's got that girl of his in this town that he comes from. I don't know how much he's got saved up now, but it might be a good thing if we could help him with her fare. It wouldn't be so much, and we might be able to charge it up against the tax. After all, it's all connected with the station."

Mario Ritti was a laughing man of about twenty-eight, tall and well built, with dark curly hair, a swarthy complexion, and a flashing eye; a peril to all the young girls in the neighborhood. He had been taken prisoner by the Eighth Army at Bardia in 1942, and he had spent two years in England as a prisoner of war, working on a farm in Cumberland, where he had learned about sheep.

After the war he had got back to his own place, Chieti, a hill town in the Abruzzi mountains near the Adriatic coast, and had put his name down almost at once for a free immigrant passage to Australia. By the terms of this, he had to work for two years as directed by the Department of Immigration in Australia, after which he would be free to choose his work.

Jack Dorman had got him from the department and was very pleased with him, and he was anxious not to lose him at the end of the two years.

"I was thinking that we might build on to the shearer's place," he said. "Extend that on a bit towards the windmill, and make a little place of three rooms there. Then if we got his girl out for him he'd be settled, and the girl could help you in the house."

Jane laughed shortly. "Fat lot of help she'd be, a girl who couldn't speak a word of English and having babies every year. I'd be helping her, not her helping me. Still, if she could cook the dinner now and then, I wouldn't say no."

She sat for a moment in thought. "How much is her passage going to cost, and how much has he got saved up?"

"He sends money back to Italy to his parents," Jack said. "He was sending home five pounds a week at one time, so he can't have very much. I suppose the passage would be about fifty quid. We'd better pay that and let him spend what he's got saved on furniture."

"Find out how much he's

got," his wife said. "He ought to put in everything he's got if we're going to do all that for him."

"That's right." He pushed his chair back from the table. "Like to drive into town this afternoon and put this cheque into the bank?"

She smiled; he was still very young at times. "Don't you trust the postman?"

"No," he said. "Not with twenty-two thousand pounds. A thing like that ought to be registered." He paused. "We could take a drive around," he said. "Look in on George and Ann for tea at Buttercup."

"Giving up work?" she asked. "That's right," he said. "Just for to-day."

"Who's going to get tea here for the boys if we go gallivanting off to Buttercup?"

"They can have cold tonight," he said.

"All right." She reached behind her for an envelope upon the table. "Want to read Aunt Ethel's letter?"

"Anything new in it?"

"Not really," she said slowly. "You'd better read it, though."

She tossed it across to him; he unfolded it and began to read.

Jane got up and glanced at the clock and put the saucepan of potatoes on to boil and put a couple more logs into the stove. Then she sat down again and picked up the pages of the letter as Jack had laid them down and read them through again herself.

It was addressed from Maymyo, Ladysmith Avenue, Ealing, a suburb to the west of London that Jane had never seen. Till recently her old aunt had always written by air mail, but lately the letters had been coming by sea mail, perhaps because there was now little urgency in any of them.

The letter ran:

"My Dear Child,
"Another of your lovely parcels came to-day all candied peel and currants and sultanas and glace cherries such lovely things that we do so enjoy getting just like pre-war when you could buy everything like that in the shops without any of these stupid little bits of paper and coupons and things."

"I get so impatient sometimes when I go to buy the ration which means I must be getting old, seventy-nine next month, my dear, but I don't feel like it it was rather a blow when Aggie died but I have quite got over that now and settled down again and last Friday I went out to bridge with Mrs. Morrison because it's three months now and I always say three months' mourning is enough for anyone."

"I'm afraid this is going to be a very long winter. I do envy you your winter in our summer because it is quite cold already and now Mr. Attlee says there isn't any coal because he's sold it all to America or Yugoslavia or somewhere so there won't be any for us and now the miners and the railwaymen all want more money if only dear Winston was back at No. 10 but everybody says he will be soon."

Jane turned the pages, glancing over her old aunt's ramblings that she had already deciphered once and that were clearly giving Jack some difficulty. Aggie was Mrs. Agatha Harding, who had shared the house at Ealing with her aunt; she was the widow of an Army officer. Now she was dead, Jane supposed that her old aunt must be living alone, although she didn't say so.

The letter rambled on: "Jennifer came down to spend the day with me one Sunday in August and she is coming again soon she has grown into such a pretty girl reddish hair and our family now twenty-four this year she ought

As I read the Stars

By EYE HILLIARD

ARIES (March 21-April 20): Take a chance on July 28, for you'll be on a winner, whether it's a love affair, a bit of speculation, or just asking a favor of the boss.

TAURUS (April 21-May 20): A lost article may turn up unexpectedly on July 28 or you may gain a new perspective on household management. July 30 a financial danger signal.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21): July 29 could drop a top secret in your ear, but don't act upon it too soon, especially on July 31, or you'll wreck the works.

CANCER (June 22-July 22): Plan your week on July 27, because there'll be no time later. July 30 may confront you with a stone wall, but you can find a detour on August 1.

LEO (July 23-August 22): A happy week-end for Lions, whose affairs flourish mightily. A passing cloud on July 30 merely makes August 1 shine brighter by contrast.

VIRGO (August 23-September 23): Better keep your affairs to yourself. July 29 could promise much, only to leave you flat on July 31, but go real ground has been lost.

LIBRA (September 24-October 23): July 28 may start off with smooth sailing, only to run into stormy weather later in the day. July 30 could bring a Libra victory over difficulties.

SCORPIO (October 24-November 22): Scorpio subjects must assert themselves this week, especially on July 30. Start as you intend to go on, and don't let yourself be imposed upon. You'll regret it if you do.

SAGITTARIUS (November 23-December 20): July 26 offers fascinating possibilities. The morning smiles on business matters and the rest of the day favors recreation. July 30 is inclined to extravagance, so count your pennies.

CAPRICORN (December 21-January 19): Steady Capricorn methods will accomplish much on July 27. Transact business with older people or anything involving property on August 1.

AQUARIUS (January 20-February 19): News on July 28 could ruffle your feathers if you take it too much to heart, but July 30 paves the way for more harmonious relationships in all spheres.

PISCES (February 20-March 20): July 26 may offer an unusual expedition into a new world. August 1 beams on new jobs, new purchases, new diets, and new resolutions. See that you get off on the right foot.

[The Australian Women's Weekly presents this astrological diary as a feature of interest only, without accepting any responsibility whatsoever for the statements contained in it.]

to have been presented at Court long ago but everything seems to be so different now and she works in an office at Blackheath the Ministry of Pensions I think.

"I asked her if there was a young man and she said no but I expect there is one all the same my dear I hope he's as nice a one as Jack I often think of that time when you were so naughty and ran off and married him and Tom was so angry and how right you were only I wish you didn't have to live so far away."

Jane wished she didn't live so far away as she read that. It might be worth while to make the long journey back to England just to see this kind old lady again, who still thought of her as a child.

"It seems so funny to think of you over fifty and with all your children out in the world and so prosperous with wool my dear I am glad for you."

"Our Government are so stupid about wool and everything I went the other day to Sayers to buy a warm vest for the winter but my dear the price was shocking even utility grade and the girl said it was all due to bulk buying of wool and the Socialist Government so I told her to tell Mr. Attlee he could keep it and I'd go on with what I've got."

"Thank you again for all your parcels and your letters write again soon and all my love."

"Your affectionate Aunt,

"Ethel."

"Keeps it up, doesn't she?" said Jack Dorman.

"Yes," said Jane, "she keeps it up. I don't like the thought of her living alone, though, at her age."

He turned the pages of the letter back. "Who's this Jennifer she speaks about?"

"That's Jennifer Morton, her granddaughter. Her daughter Lucy married Edward Morton—the one that's a doctor in Leicester."

"Well, can't she go and live with the old girl?"

"I don't know," said Jane. "I don't suppose there's much that we can do about it, anyway."

Jack Dorman went out to the yard and Jane began to lay the kitchen table for the mid-

day dinner. She was vaguely unhappy and uneasy; there was a menace in all the news from England now, both in the letters from her old aunt and in the newspapers.

The most extraordinary things seemed to be going on there, and for no reason at all. In all her life, and it had been a hard life at times, she had never been short of all the meat that she could eat or practically any other sort of food or fruit that she desired.

It was the same with coal; in all her life she had never had to think about economising with fuel.

Indeed, at Merrijig, with the hot sun and the high rainfall, the difficulty was to keep the forest from encroaching on the paddocks; if you left a corner ungrazed for three years, the bush would be five feet high all over it.

Whatever sort of way could Aunt Ethel be living in when she could not afford a warm vest for the winter? Why a warm vest—why not three or four? She must do something about the washing. Was clothing rationed still? She seemed to remember that clothes rationing had been removed in England.

She stopped laying the table and unfolded the letter and read the passage over again, a little frown of perplexity upon her forehead. There wasn't anything about rationing; she hadn't got the vest because it was expensive. How foolish of her; old people had to have warm clothes, especially in England in the winter.

It was true that the price of woollen garments was going up even in Australia by leaps and bounds, but Aunt Ethel couldn't possibly be as hard up as that. The Foxleys had always had plenty of money. Perhaps she was going a bit senile.

She went and rang the dinner bell outside the flyscreen door, rather depressed.

The men came back to the homestead for dinner; she heard Tim and Mario washing at the basin under the tank-stand in the yard, and she began to dish up.

Please turn to page 35

PRESENTLY they

The Far Country

Continued from page 34

came in with Jack and sat down at the table, she carved half a pound of meat for each of them and heaped the plates high with vegetables; she gave Jack rather less and herself much less. A wet jangle followed the meat and cups of tea.

Relaxed and smoking at the end of the meal, Tim Archer said, "Would you be using the utility Saturday evening, Mr. Dorman? There's the Red Cross dance."

"I dunno," He turned to Jane. "Want to go to the dance on Saturday?"

It was a suggestion that had not been made to her for seven or eight years and it came strangely from Jack now, but everything was strange on this day of the wool cheque. She laughed shortly.

"I don't want to go to any dance," she said. "My dancing days are done, but let the boys go if they want to."

"You going, Mario?"

The dark, curly-haired young man looked up with laughing eyes. "Si, Mr. Dorman."

"Go on," his boss grumbled. "Talk English, like a Christian. You can if you want to."

The young man grinned more broadly. "Yes," he said. "I like to go ver' much. I like dance much."

"I bet you do..." He turned to Tim. "If you go you've got to look after him," he said. "Don't let him get into any trouble."

There was some prejudice against the New Australians in the district, well founded in part, and there had been a row over Mario once before at the first dance that he attended and before he was accused of the social climate of Australia.

"I'll keep an eye on him, Mr. Dorman."

"All right." He paused. "Did you get the tickets?"

"Not yet. Thought I'd better wait and see about the utility."

"I'll be going down to Banbury after dinner, in about an hour. I'll get them if you give me the money."

"Thanks, Mr. Dorman," Tim hesitated. "Would you be going by the post office?"

"I could."

"Would you look in and tell Elsie Peters I'll be coming to the dance with Mario?"

Jack nodded. "I'll tell her." Presently they got up from the table, Tim to unload the utility, Jack Dorman to go into his office, and Mario to help Jane to clear the table and wash up. A quarter of an hour later Jack Dorman came out as Mario was leaving.

"Say, Mario," he said. "I've been thinking about that you've got back in Italy. You still want to get her out here in Australia?"

"Yes, Mr. Dorman. I wanta ver' much. I love Lucia. We marry when she come here."

"How much does the ticket cost?"

"Fifty-eight pounds."

"How much have you got saved towards it?"

"Twenty-seven pounds."

"Look, Mario. I was thinking of building a bit of a house for you and Lucia, 'n' paying for her ticket. You could spend your twenty-seven quid on furniture for it, 'n' make the rest in the evenings. If I do that, will you stay with me two years after your time's up and not go off to someone else for better money?"

Only about half of that got through. They discussed it for a little, the Italian gradually breaking into rapture as the proposal became clear.

"Okay, Mr. Dorman. I thank you ver' much."

"You've been working well, Mario. You go on the way you're going and you'll be right. Okay, then—that's a deal. What do you want to do now—and Lucia the money for her passage right away?"

"Yes, Mr. Dorman. Lucia—the very happy when she gets letter."

"Look then, Mario. You go and write her a letter now. I'll take it into town with me this afternoon and put the money order in it, fifty-eight pounds, 'n' send it off by air mail." He got that through at the second attempt.

"Thank you ver', ver' much, Mr. Dorman. I go now to write Lucia." He went off urgently to his bunkroom.

Dorman went into the house again to change for his journey into town; he had a dark tweed suit that he wore on these occasions. He sat in the kitchen polishing his town shoes while Jane changed, and presently he went out into the yard to get the utility. By the car, Mario came up to him with an envelope in his hand.

"For Lucia," he said. "I no have stamp. Will you fix stamp on for me, please? For air mail?"

"Okay. You've told her in the letter that there's a money order going in it, fifty-eight pounds?"

"I have said that, Mr. Dorman. In Italian I have said that to Lucia, and now she is to come ver' quick."

"I bet you've said that she's to come ver' quick. I'll see about the timber for your house when I'm in town."

"Thank you ver', ver' much, Mr. Dorman."

"Okay. Get down and go on with that crutching."

He drove into the town that afternoon with Jane by his side; they parked the utility outside the bank and went in together while she cashed a cheque.

JANE went out first and went on to the dressmaker, and Jack went into the bank manager's office to see about the draft for fifty-eight pounds payable to Lucia Tereno at Chieti, Italy. At the conclusion of that business he produced his wool cheque for the credit of his account.

The manager took it and glanced at it with an expressionless face; for the past week he had been receiving one or two like it every day.

"I'll give you the receipt slip outside, Mr. Dorman," he said. "What do you want done with it? All into the current account?"

"That's right."

"If you think of investing any of it, I could write to our investments section at head office and get up a few suggestions. It's a pity to see a sum like that lying idle."

"I'll think it over," said Dorman. "I'm going down to Melbourne in a month or two. A good bit of it'll go in tax, and there's one or two things wanted on the station."

The manager smiled faintly; he knew that one, too. "I expect there are," he said. "Well, let me know if I can do anything."

Dorman left the bank and went to the post office; he got stamps and an air mail sticker for Mario's letter and handed it to Elsie Peters for the post. "I was to tell you that Tim Archer's coming to the Red Cross dance with Mario," he said.

"Goody," she replied. "He was in this morning, but he didn't know then if he'd be able to get in to it."

"Aye, they can have the car. If that Mario gets into any trouble they won't have it again. I said I'd get the tickets for them. Where would I do that?"

"Mrs. Hayward, up by Marshall's. She's selling them. I'll get them for you if you like to give me the money, Mr. Dorman, and send them out with the mail."

He handed her a note from his wallet. "Thanks. Anything more happened about you going home?"

She nodded, with eyes shining. "I've got a passage booked on the fifth of May. It's ter-

ribly exciting, I just can't wait. Dad did well out of the wool this year."

"Fine," he said. Jack Dorman went out of the post office and got into the car and went to see the builder. He stayed with him some time talking about the three-roomed house for Mario, and arranged for him to come and measure up for the timber required.

This all took a little time, and by the time he got back to the dressmaker to pick up Jane she was ready for him. They did a little more shopping together, put the parcels on the ledge behind the driving seat, and drove out on the road to Buttercup.

George and Ann Pearson lived on rather a smaller property of about fifteen hundred acres; they had no river and they got the water for their stock from dams bulldozed or scooped out to form catchment pools at strategic points upon the land.

They were younger than the Dormans, and they still had a young family. The youngest child was Judith, only eight years old, but old enough to catch and saddle her own pony every morning and ride six miles to school with her satchel on her back.

George Pearson had rigged up a diving-board and a pair of steps to turn his largest dam into a swimming-pool, and the children were bathing in it as the Dormans drove by. They had evidently brought friends on their way back from school, because three ponies grazed beside the dam with saddles on their backs.

Ann Pearson came out to meet the visitors. She was Australian born and spoke with a marked Australian accent, in contrast to her husband, who had come out as a farmer's son in 1930 and still retained a trace of Somerset in his speech.

"Didn't you see George?" she asked after the first greetings. "He went down to the dam with the children."

"We didn't stop," said Jane. "He's probably down there."

"Just dropped in to see if George had got his wool cheque," Jack Dorman said, grinning.

Ann said, "Oh, my word." There seemed no need for any further comment.

Jack turned to Jane and said, "It's all right. They've got enough money to give us tea."

"Give tea to everybody in the shirt," said Ann. "How long's it going on for, Jack? I tell you, we get sort of frightened sometimes. It can't go on like this, can it?"

"I'll be down next year," Jack Dorman said. "Not real low, but down to something reasonable, I'd say. It can blow a blizzard after that, for all I care."

They got out of the car and went with her to the wide verandah and sat down in deck-chairs. "That's what George thinks, too. I'd be quite glad if it went down a bit. It doesn't seem right, somehow. It's not good for the children, either, to see money come so easy."

She told them that they were sailing for England in April; the children were going to stay with their grandmother at Nagambie.

"George booked the cabin six months ago," she said, "but I never really thought it would come on."

George Pearson came back presently with six hungry children, and they all sat down to tea at the long table in the kitchen, eleven of them, counting the hired man, a Pole from Slonim, who spoke little English. They ate the best part of two joints of cold roast mutton with a great dish of potatoes, topping up with bread and jam and two plum cakes and many cups of tea.

Please turn to page 36

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GOING out into the yard, the men put the three visiting children on their ponies and saw them off so that they would be home by nightfall.

The two graziers talked quietly for a time on the verandah while their wives washed up indoors. "Going home in April, so Ann told us," Dorman said. "Aye," George smiled for a few minutes in silence.

"I want to see what things are like at home," he said presently. "They may not be as bad as you read."

The two wives came out and joined their men on the verandah. Jane said, "Ann's been telling me about Peter Loring falling off his horse, Jack. Did you hear about that?"

Her husband shook his head. "That one of the Loring boys from Balacava?"

She nodded. "The little one—eleven or twelve years old. You tell him, Ann."

Ann Pearson said: "It was a funny thing, Jack. I had to go into town early on Friday, about nine o'clock. Well, I got up to the main road in the utility, and there was a pony by the side of the road, and Peter Loring, with blood all over him from scratches, sitting on the grass. I got out and asked him what was the matter, and he said he fell off the pony; he was on his way to school. I asked him if he was hurt, and he said it hurt him to talk and he felt funny. And just then a truck came by with a couple of those chaps from the lumber camp in it."

Jack Dorman said, "The camp up at Lamirra?"

"That's right. Well, this truck stopped and the men got down, and one of them came and asked what was the matter. New Australian he was, German or something—he spoke very foreign. So I told him, and he began feeling the boy all over, and then the other man told me he was a doctor in his own country but not here."

"I asked him, 'Is it concussion, Doctor?' He seemed a bit puzzled for the moment, and then he made little Peter open his mouth and took a look down his throat, and then he found some stuff coming out of his ear. And then he said, 'It is not concussion, and the bleeding, that is nothing. He has ear disease and a temperature. He should go at once to hospital in Banbury.' So I drove this doctor and Peter into town to the hospital. And Dr Jennings was there, and he said it was a sort of mastoiditis—otitis something, he said."

"Pretty good, that," said Jack Dorman.

George Pearson said, "Dr. Jennings knew all about this chap. He's a Czech, not a German. He works up at the camp there, doing his two years."

"What's his name?" "He did tell me, but I forgot. One of those foreign names, it was—Cylinder, or something. Not that, but something like it. Ann drove him, back to Lamirra."

His wife said, "He was quite a quiet, well-behaved one for a New Australian. I do think it was quick of him to find out what was wrong."

"Lucky he came along just then," said Jack.

"My word," said Ann with feeling.

The Dorman left soon after that, and drove back to Leonora. Life went on as usual on the station, and on Saturday evening Tim Archer drove into Banbury with Mario Ritti for the Red Cross dance. He hit it off all right with Mario in spite of their very different backgrounds, but there was always a little difficulty with Mario at a dance.

There was a barrier of language and experience between the Italian and the local Australian girls; he was inclined to be too bold with them, and they would not willingly have been seen with him except at a dance,

The Far Country

Continued from page 35

where social barriers were some what broken down.

For a time they stood with a little crowd of young men round the door while the girls sat on chairs in long lines on each side of the floor waiting to be asked to dance; only two or three couples were yet dancing, and the place was still stone cold.

Tim studied the girls. Elsie Peters was there talking to Joan McFarlane. If he had been alone he would have gone and asked one or other of them to dance, but that meant leaving Mario high and dry.

He felt an obligation to the Italian to get him started with at least one partner before going off to his own friends, and he did not think that either Elsie or Joan would appreciate it if he landed her with an Eytie who spoke poor English.

He glanced down the row of girls beside the floor, and saw two black-haired girls sitting together. They were both rather broad in the face, and both wore woollen dresses of a sombre hue and rather an unfashionable cut. They were strangers to Banbury; clearly New Australians.

Tim nudged Mario. "What about that couple over there?" he asked. "They'd be Italian, wouldn't they?"

"I do not think," said Mario. "I think Austrian, perhaps, or Polish. I have not seen these girls before."

"Nor have I. Let's go and ask them." Once Mario was launched with these two, he would be able to go off and dance with his own sort.

CROSSING the floor, Tim spoke to the nearest girl and said, "May I have this dance? My name's Tim Archer." Mario bowed from the waist before the other and said, "Mario Ritti."

Both girls smiled and got to their feet. Tim's girl was about twenty-five years old and pleasant-looking in a broad way; in later life she would certainly be stout. She danced a quick-step reasonably well, and as they moved off she said with a strange accent, "Teem Archer?" "That's right," he said. "Tim. What's your name?"

She smiled. "I am Tamara Peredjak."

"Are you Polish?" he asked.

She shook her head. "I was born in the Ukraine. He did not know where that was, but didn't like to say so. 'Now I am come from Mulheim, in the American zone, to Australia.' She called it Owstralia. 'I am to work here at the hospital.'"

"Are you a nurse?"

She shook her head. "I think you call it wardmaid. I am to do scrubbing and the carrying trays, and the washing dishes, and the washing clothes. I am to work with Natasha, who is dancing with your friend."

"Do you like it?"

She shrugged her shoulders. "I have been working so since five years, in the works canteen at Mulheim. Once I was to be a schoolteacher, but with the war that was not possible."

Presently the dance ended and he took her back to her seat. Mario immediately asked her to dance again, and Tim escaped and went to dance with Joan McFarlane.

At the same time at Leonora, Jane sat with Jack before the kitchen stove in wooden arm-chairs with cushions. Jack was reading the paper. Jane sat with the open letter from Aunt Ethel in her hand.

Presently she said, "It's so difficult, because she never asks for anything or says what she wants. She does seem to like the dried fruit, though, that I've been sending."

"I'd have thought that a meat parcel might be better," he said. "They haven't got much meat from all I hear."

She turned the letter over, reading it again for the tenth time. "I can't make out about this vest," she said, troubled. "It almost reads as if she's short of money, doesn't it?"

"Could be," Jack glanced across at his wife.

"Like to send her some?" he asked.

She looked up quickly and met his eyes. "Send her money? She might take it as an insult."

"She might buy herself a vest," he said.

She sat in silence for a time. "We couldn't send her just a little money, Jack," she said at last. "It would have to be nothing or else quite a lot, as if it was a sort of legacy. Enough to be sure that the wouldn't take it badly. Enough to keep her for a couple of years if she's in real trouble."

"Well, we've got a lot," he said. "We'll do whatever you think right."

There was a pause. "I feel we kind of owe it to her," he said presently. "To see her right if she's in any trouble. We haven't done so bad together, you and I. It might never have come to anything if she hadn't backed us up."

"I know. That's what I feel." She stared down at the letter in her hands. "I'm not a bit happy about this, Jack," she said at last. "I don't like the sound of it at all. If we've got the money, I'd like to send her five hundred pounds."

Jennifer Morton went home for the following week-end.

Most of her life was spent in the London suburb of Blackheath, where she worked with the Ministry of Pensions and had a bed-sitting room in a boarding-house. But over a month she went home to Leicester to see her parents, travelling up from London early on the Saturday morning, and returning late on Sunday night.

Please turn to page 37

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JENNIFER knew these were duty visits; she was fond enough of her father and mother, but she had now no interests and few acquaintances in her own home town. Both her brothers had been killed in the war.

She didn't even seem to be needed, for her mother and her father were remarkably self-sufficient; her mother never wanted to do anything else but to stay at home and run the house and cook her father's dinner. Her father, an over-worked general practitioner, never wanted to go out at night unless, in the winter, to a meeting of the British Medical Association or, in the summer, to a meeting of the Bowls Club.

This was a good thing, for the night air made her mother cough, and she seldom went out of the house after midday in the winter. In all, her father and her mother had settled firmly into a routine of life moulded by overwork and by poor health, a groove that left little room for the wider interests of a daughter.

Not that those interests were very startling. Jennifer had been mildly in love when she was twenty, soon after the war, but he had gone to a job in Montreal and gradually the correspondence languished.

She was friendly with a good many men, for she was an attractive girl, with auburn hair and the grey eyes that go with it. She knew a good deal about the London theatres, and she saw most of the films worth seeing; she could speak a little French, and she had spent two summer holidays in France with a couple of girls from her office.

Now she was planning a trip to Italy for her next holiday, but that was nine months ahead. She had bought three little books and was teaching herself Italian out of them.

That week-end was like all the others, only more so. Though it was only October her mother was coughing badly.

Her father was more over-worked than ever; he seemed to spend most of his time writing certificates for patients of the nationalised Health Service, who stood in queues each morning and afternoon at the surgery door. There was nothing Jennifer could do to help them and no place for her; she left them late on Sunday afternoon and travelled back to London.

She worked all next day as usual at her office, leaving at five and walking back through the suburban streets in the October dusk to her boarding-house. Very soon now it would be dark when she came out from work; for two months in the winter she would not walk home in daylight.

She was beginning to dread those two months; in mid-winter she got a sense of suffo-

cation, a feeling that she would never see the sun and the fresh air again.

It was raining a little that evening, and she walked back with her blue raincoat buttoned tightly round her neck. She had intended to go out to the pictures with a friend from the boarding-house after tea, but now she thought that she would stay at home and read a magazine and study her Italian.

She went up the steps of the shabby old brick house that was her home, and she let herself in at the front door with her latch-key. As she took off her wet coat her landlady came up from the kitchen.

"There was a telephone call for you about an hour ago," she said. "A personal call. I told them you'd be back about five-thirty."

Jennifer looked up in surprise. "Do you know who it was from?"

The woman shook her head. "They didn't say."

The call came through a little later, and Jennifer hurried to take it. It was her mother, speaking from their home.

"Jenny, dear, listen to this. We had a telephone call from the district nurse at Ealing. She said that Granny's ill. She had a fall in the street apparently, and they took her to the hospital, but they hadn't a bed, so they took her home and put her to bed there. The nurse said somebody would have to go there to look after her. Jenny, could you go to Ealing and see what's the matter, and then telephone us?"

Jennifer thought quickly. Ealing was on the other side of London, an hour up to Charing Cross if she were lucky with the trains, and then an hour down to Ealing Broadway, and a ten minutes' walk. She could get something to eat on the way, perhaps.

"I can do that, Mummy," she said. "I could be there by about half-past eight."

"Oh, my dear, I am so sorry. I think you'll have to go. She oughtn't to be lying alone, of course, but she won't leave the house. We'll have to fix up something better for her."

"Has Daddy heard about this yet?"

"He's out still on his rounds. I couldn't get hold of him."

"Don't worry, Mummy," said the girl. "I'll go over there, and give you a ring when I've seen the nurse. We'll fix up something between us."

"What time will you be telephoning, dear?"

"It may be very late, if I've got to hurry to catch trains," the girl said.

She did not wait for supper, but started for the station straight away. She travelled across London to the other side

The Far Country

Continued from page 36

and came to Ealing Broadway station about two hours later.

It was raining here in earnest, great driving gusts of rain blown by a high wind down the deserted back streets.

Her grandmother lived in a four-bedroomed house called "Maymo," built in the somewhat spacious style of fifty years ago, a house with a large garden and no garage. Her husband had bought it when they retired from Burma in 1924.

He had bought it prudently because he had an idea even then that he would not survive his wife, and so he had avoided an extravagant establishment. In fact, he had died in 1930, comfortable in the knowledge that her window's pension, her small private income, and the house in perpetuity would render her secure until she came to join him.

There she had lived, surrounded by the treasures they had gathered up together in a life spent in the East. A gilded Buddha sat at the hall door, a pair of elephant tusks formed a hanger for a great brass dinner gong. Glass cases housed Indian dolls, and models of sampans and junks, and imitation man- goes out of which a wood and plaster cobra would jump to bite your finger—very terrifying.

Jennifer came to the house in the wet, windy night; it was in total darkness, which seemed most unusual.

STANDING in the porch in her wet shoes and raincoat, the girl pushed the bell, but heard nothing. She waited for a minute and then pressed the bell again. Apparently it wasn't working. She rapped with the knocker and waited for a couple of minutes for something to happen; then she tried the handle of the door. It was open and she went into the hall.

A candle burned on the hall table, held in a brass candlestick from Benares. Jennifer went forward and pressed the electric switch for the hall light, but no light came.

She stood in the hall listening to the house. It was dead silent but for the tinkling of the rain. She raised her head and called, "Granny! It's me—Jennifer. Are you upstairs?"

There was no answer. Jennifer took off her coat and laid it on a chair and picked up the candle and went into the drawing-room.

There was nothing unusual about that room; it was clean and tidy, though stone cold. She would have expected on a night like that to see a fire burning in the grate, but apparently her grandmother had not used the room that day.

Jennifer went quickly through the dining-room and kitchen; everything was quite in order there. A tin of gruel and a half bottle of milk stood on the kitchen table.

She turned and went upstairs to the bedrooms. The door of her grandmother's room was shut; she stood outside with the flickering candle in her hand and knocked. She said again, "Granny, it's me—Jennifer. Can I come in?" There was no answer, so she turned the handle and went into the room.

Ethel Trecheam lay on her back in the bed, and at the first glance Jennifer thought that she was dead, and her heart leaped up into her throat. Then she saw that the old lady was breathing evenly, very deeply asleep.

With the relief Jennifer staggered a little and felt sick; then she recovered herself and looked around the room.

Everything there seemed to be in order, though her grandmother's day clothes were thrown rather haphazardly into

a chair. The old lady was evidently quite all right, in bed and asleep; if she had had a fall a sleep would do her good.

It looked as if somebody had been in the house looking after her, possibly the district nurse who had telephoned to Jennifer's mother. It seemed unwise to wake the old lady up, and presently Jennifer tiptoed from the room, leaving the door ajar in order that she might hear any movement.

The time was then about nine o'clock, and she had eaten nothing since lunch except a cup of tea and a biscuit at the office. She realised that her momentary faintness in the bedroom had a good deal to do with the fact that she was very, very hungry, and went down to the kitchen, candle in hand, to get herself a meal.

In a few minutes she had made the extraordinary discovery that there was no food in the house at all. The half-bottle of milk and the tin of gruel upon the kitchen table seemed to be the only edibles, except for a few condiments in a cupboard.

The larder—her grandmother had no refrigerator—was empty but for a small hard rind of cheese upon a plate and three cartons of dried fruits, candied peel, sultanas, and glace cherries, open and evidently in use.

Jennifer stood in the middle of the kitchen deeply puzzled, wondering what her grandmother had been eating recently and where she had been eating it. Had she been having her meals out or was there something blacker waiting here to be uncovered?

She had been down to visit the old lady one Sunday about a month before and her grandmother had given her a very good lunch and tea, a roast duck with apple sauce with roast potatoes and cauliflower, and a mince pie to follow. For tea there had been buttered scones and jam, and a big home-made cake with plenty of fruit in it.

One thing at least was evident; that she would have to spend the night in the house. She could not possibly go back to Blackheath and leave things as they were. Whoever had lit the candle and left the door open had done it in the expectation that some relation would arrive.

If Jennifer was to spend the night there, though, she felt she must have something to eat. Ealing Broadway was only a few hundred yards away and there would probably be a cafe or a coffee-stall open there; she could leave a note upon the hall table and go out and have a quick meal.

She went upstairs again, but the old lady was still deeply asleep. Thinking to find a place in which to sleep herself, she opened the door of the guest bedroom, but it was empty. Pictures still hung upon the wall, but there was no furniture in the room at all and no carpet on the bare boards of the floor.

This was amazing, because Jennifer had slept in that room less than a year before; it had been prim and neat, and old-fashioned, and very comfortable. What on earth had the old lady done with all the furniture? The girl went quickly to the other two bedrooms and found them in a similar condition, empty but for the pictures on the wall.

There was no bed in the house except the one that her grandmother occupied; if Jennifer were to sleep there that night she would have to sleep on the sofa in the drawing-room. There did not seem to be any bedding either; the linen cupboard held only a pair of clean sheets, a couple of towels, a tablecloth or two, and a few table napkins.

It seemed incredible, but the

Fashion FROCKS

Ready to wear
or cut out
ready to make.



"LYNETTE."—Baby's nightgown. A favorite style for baby's nightwear. It is available in a very good quality white flannelette, ready to wear only. Size, infants to 6 months. Price, 18/3. Postage and registration, 1/8 extra.

"MARGERY."—Half-slip. Pretty style available in frosted organdie in shades of sky-blue, pastel lemon, pink, and white.

Ready To Wear: Sizes 24in., 26in., 28in. waist, 49/6; 30in. and 32in. waist, 53/9. Postage and registration, 1/8 extra.

Cut Out Only: Sizes 24in., 26in., 28in. waist, 37/3; 30in. and 32in. waist, 39/9. Postage and registration, 1/8 extra.

"NARA."—Frock. A smart easy-to-wear style available in an excellent quality fleeced woollen tweed, and the color choice includes brown, green, and blue.

Ready To Wear: Sizes 32in. and 34in. bust, £7/3/6; 36in. and 38in. bust, £7/6/9. Postage and registration, 3/6 extra.

Cut Out Only: Sizes 32in. and 34in. bust, £6/4/3; 36in. and 38in. bust, £6/7/6. Postage and registration, 3/9 extra.

NOTE: Please make a second color choice. No C.O.D. orders accepted. If ordering by mail, send to address given on page 39. Frocks may be inspected or obtained immediately at Fashion Frocks, Standard's Building, 31 Pier Street, Sydney.

old lady must have sold her furniture. And there was no food in the house. Could it be that Granny had no money? But she had a pension, Jennifer knew that, and she had always been well off. More likely that she was going a bit mental with old age and that she had deluded herself into the belief that she was poor.

She went downstairs and found a piece of writing paper in her grandmother's desk and wrote a note to leave on the hall table with the candle; then she put on her raincoat and went out to get a meal. She found a cafe open in the main street and had a sort of vegetable pie.

It was dull and insipid with no meat, but she had two helpings of it, and followed it up with stewed plums and coffee. Then she bought a couple of rolls filled with a thin smear of potted meat for her breakfast, and went back to the house in Ladysmith Avenue.

In the house everything was as she had left it; her note lay beneath the candle unread. She took the candle and went up to her grandmother's room, but the old lady was still sleeping deeply; she had not moved at all.

The girl came out of the bedroom, and as she did so she heard movement in the hall and saw the light from an electric torch. She came downstairs

with the candle, and in its light she saw a middle-aged woman standing there in a wet raincoat, torch in hand.

The woman said, "Are you one of Mrs. Trecheam's relations?"

Jennifer said, "I'm her granddaughter."

"Oh, Well, I'm the district nurse. You know she had an accident?"

"I don't know very much except that my mother got a telephone call asking somebody to come here. She rang me."

The nurse nodded. "I rang your mother at Leicester as soon as I could get the number out of the old dear. I'd better tell you what it's all about, and then you can take over."

Jennifer moved towards the door. "We'd better go in here, in case she wakes up."

"She won't wake up to-night—not after what the doctor gave her." However, they went into the drawing-room and stood in the candlelight.

"She had a fall in the street this morning, between here and the Broadway," the nurse said.

"She didn't seem able to get up, so the police got an ambulance and took her to the hospital. Well, they had a bed, and anyway, there didn't seem to be much wrong with her except debility."

Please turn to page 38.

Page 37

Beauty in brief:

Party perfume

By CAROLYN EARLE

● To realise the full bouquet of perfume—just how pungent it will smell when you wear it—test it on your skin.

PERFUMES alter slightly in direct contact with skin, and the same fragrance never smells exactly the same on different wearers.

It's a moot point how much perfume one should wear; uncharitable men have been known to complain about the knock-out effect of over-generous perfuming.

When you're all dressed up and going places you're usually tempted to be exotic with a heavier fragrance than you would use in the daytime.

Just remember that perfume will grow stronger in a hot room, so if you are partying or theatre-going use perfume with special care, and always with discretion.

As a finishing touch that will keep everybody happy, smooth a drop of perfume behind your ears, on the throat, wrists, temples, or on the palms of your hands. It will be enough to spin a mist round you.

JENNIFER nodded silently, and the nurse ended briefly, "So they rang me up and sent her home here in the ambulance. I put her to bed and got in Dr. Thompson."

"What did he say?"

The nurse glanced at her. "When did you see her last?"

"About a month ago."

"How was she then?"

"Very much as usual. She doesn't do much, but she's seventy-nine, I think."

"Was she eating normally?"

"She gave me a very good meal, roast duck and mince pie."

"She ate that, did she?"

"Of course. Why?"

"She doesn't look as if she's eaten anything since," the nurse said shortly. "She's very emaciated, and there's not a scrap of food here in the house except some dried fruits."

Jennifer said, "I simply can't understand it. She's got plenty of money."

The nurse glanced at her. "You're sure of that?"

"Well—I think so."

"I rang up the electricity," the nurse said, "and told them that the power had failed and they must send a man to put it right. They said they'd disconnected the supply because the bill hadn't been paid. You'd better see about that in the morning if you're going to keep her here."

"I'll go round there first thing."

"I had to go and get a candle of my own," the nurse said. "I brought another one round with me now." She took it from her pocket.

"I looked for coal to light a fire, but there's not a scrap. I got a tin of gruel and some milk, and I got the people next door to let me boil up some hot milk for her and some water to fill the hot-water bottles. I'll take them round there and fill them again before I go."

She glanced at Jennifer. "You're staying here to-night?"

"I wasn't going to, but I'd better. Will you be here?"

The nurse laughed shortly.

The Far Country

Continued from page 37

"Me? I've got a baby case to-night. I just slipped round here to see if anyone had come. I'll have to get some sleep after that. I'll look round here about midday to see how you're getting on. I said I'd give the doctor a ring after that."

Jennifer nodded. "I'll see you then. Is she in any danger, do you think?"

"I don't think she'll go to-night," the nurse said. "Whether she'll pull round or not depends a lot on her digestion. When she wakes, give her another cup of the gruel. She can have as much of that as she'll take—I'll show you how to make it. But don't let her have anything else till the doctor's seen her. And keep the bottles nice and warm."

Practical, hard-headed, and efficient, she whisked through her duties showing Jennifer what to do, and was out of the house in a quarter of an hour. The girl was left alone with all the Indian and Burmese relics, with one candle and no fire and nowhere much to sleep.

She gave up the idea of going out in the rain at ten o'clock at night to find a public telephone to ring up her mother; that would have to wait till morning. She went up to her grandmother's bedroom and took off her wet shoes and stockings and rubbed her feet with a towel.

Then she found a pair of her grandmother's woollen stockings and put them on, also her grandmother's bedroom slippers and overcoat. She found a travelling rug and wrapped it around her and settled down to spend the night in an armchair by her grandmother's bedside, chilled and uncomfortable, dozing off now and then and waking again with the cold.

In the grey dawn she woke from one of these uneasy dozes, stiff and chilled to the bone. She looked at the bed and saw that her grandmother was awake; she was lying in exactly the same position, but her eyes were open.

Jennifer got up and went to

the bedside. The old lady turned her head upon the pillow and said in a thin voice, "Jenny, my dear. Whatever are you doing here?"

The girl said, "I've come to look after you, Granny. They telephoned and told us that you weren't so well."

"I know, my dear. I fell down in the street—such a stupid thing to do. Is the nurse here still?"

"She'll be back later on this morning, Granny. Is there anything you want?"

She told her, and Jennifer entered on the duties of a sick-room for the first time in her life. Presently she took the hot-water bottles and the remains of the milk and went to the house next door, where a harassed mother was getting breakfast for a husband and three little children.

As she warmed the milk and filled the water-bottles the woman asked her, "How is the old lady this morning?"

"She's staying in bed, of course," said Jennifer, "but she's not too bad. I think she's going to be all right."

"I am so sorry," the woman said. "I wish we'd been able to do more for her, but everything's so difficult these days. I'd no idea that she was ill. She's been going out as usual every morning. It was a terrible surprise when she came back in an ambulance yesterday."

Jennifer was interested. "She goes out every morning, does she?"

"That's right. Every morning about ten o'clock. She goes down to the public library in the park to read the papers. She told me that one day."

Jennifer thanked her for her help, and went back with the hot milk to make gruel, and took it up to the bedroom with the hot-water bottles. She propped her grandmother up in

bed with the pillows and helped her while she drank, but she could not get her to take more than half the cup.

"I don't want any more, my dear," she said. "I think I'm better without anything."

The hot drink had stimulated her a little. "Jenny," she said, "I've been thinking. Haven't you got to go to work?"

The girl said, "That's all right, Granny. I'm going out presently to ring up Mummy to tell her how you are, and I'll ring up the office then. I'll stay with you for a few days until you're better."

"But Jenny, dear, you can't stay here. There isn't anywhere for you to sleep. Where did you sleep last night?"

"I'll be all right here, Granny," the girl said. "I'll fix up something."

"But there isn't any electricity. You can't stay here."

A tear trickled down the old, lined cheek. "Oh, things are so troublesome."

"That's all right, Granny," the girl said. "I'll go and see about the electricity this morning and get them to turn it on."

"But it's seventeen pounds, Jenny—they came and turned it off. Such a nice man, but he had to do his job. I've been getting on quite well without it."

"Well, you're not going to get along without it any longer, Granny," Jennifer said firmly. "You can't when you're in bed."

She thought quickly: she had about thirty pounds in her bank, but her cheque-book was at Blackheath on the other side of London.

"I'll get them to turn it on again," she said. "Don't worry about it."

"Oh, my dear, I don't know what to do."

The girl wiped the old cheeks with her handkerchief. "Cheer up, Granny," she said. "It'll be all right. Tell me—isn't there any money?"

The old lady said, "None at all. You see, I've lived too long."

The Family Scrapbook

By DR. ERNEST G. OSBORNE

I DON'T mean to be cross with Marilyn but when I see her using that high and mighty tone towards little Keith I can just see myself in Keith's place, with my older sister Grace bossing the daylight out of me, and I can't stand it."

So says a father whom Edith Neisser quotes in her book "Brothers and Sisters." The father is not unique. Everybody carries some "shades of the past."

Another father tells of his concern when his wife, washing the five-year-old's hair, accidentally got soap in her daughter's eyes. He feels sure that his over-reaction came because his own mother was so frequently careless in the same situation.

Mrs. Travers finds it hard to get along with other women. She has an idea that the fact that her older sisters bullied her a good deal lies at the root of her difficulty. In spite of



Shades of the past

herself she finds the old feelings return when she is closely associated with women.

When we find ourselves acting in ways we don't quite understand, it is a good rule of thumb to look to the "shades of the past." In more cases than not we'll find a clue to our behaviour, and our feeling. And merely recognising what causes us to act as we do is often helpful in changing our behaviour.

All names are fictitious.

year they stopped it altogether and wound up the fund."

The girl said, "Oh, Granny! And you gave me such a lovely dinner when I came here last!"

"Of course, my dear. A young girl like you must have proper meals. Although it's all so difficult, with all this money."

Jenny, have you had your breakfast yet?"

"Not yet. I'm going out in a few minutes, and I'll get some then."

"I'm afraid there's nothing in the house, Jenny."

"Don't think about it, Granny. I'll get a few things when I'm out and bring them in."

"Yes, do that, dear." She paused. "Will you bring to the little red morocco case that's on the dressing table?"

Please turn to page 42

Bobby's Team Captain Now!

HIS COLDS DON'T HANG ON ANY MORE!



THOSE DRAGGING COLDS used to keep Bobby home from school and rob him of all his energy. How can you have any fun with all those bad colds? How can you get good marks? How can you play in the team?



THEN BOBBY'S MOTHER had an idea. "I'll rub him tonight with Vicks Vaporub. They say it fights colds direct in the air passages and ends colds faster. Maybe that's what Bobby needs." And she tried it!



1. DIRECT THROUGH THE SKIN—Like a warming poultice, Vaporub quickly eased the tightness and pain in Bobby's chest. "Gee, Mummy," he said, "that does feel good! My cold feels better already!"



2. DIRECT THROUGH THE NOSE—As Bobby inhaled Vaporub's soothing medicinal vapours, his stuffy nose cleared with every breath. Irritation was soothed, coughing was eased, and Bobby slept like a top!



WHAT A CHANGE IN BOBBY!

Bobby's colds don't hang on any more. And what a change in the boy! Now, he's bright at school, full of energy, and captain of his class team!

Just rub on...



CLEARs THE WHOLE FAMILY'S COLDS

NEEDLEWORK NOTIONS

No. 279.—HOUSEGOWN

A smart but practical style featuring large lapels and patch pockets. Available cut out ready for you to make yourself with full instructions given for making. The material is the good wearing summer breeze cotton in an attractive multi-colored floral on white ground. Sizes 32 and 34in. bust, 41/11; 36 and 38in. bust, 43/9. Postage and registration, 3/3 extra.

No. 280.—BOYS' SUIT

Smart suit for the young lad, and is available cut out ready for you to make yourself in ocrea, and the color choice includes green, cream, and maize. Alternate colors may be ordered for the shirt. Sizes: Lengths 18in. for 2yrs., 21/11; 19in. for 3yrs., 22/9; 20in. for 4yrs., 23/11. Postage and registration, 1/8 extra.

280

NOTE: Please make a second color choice. No C.O.D. orders accepted. All Needlework Notions over 6/11 sent by registered post.

No. 281.—SUPPERCLOTH AND SERVIETTES

An attractive suppercloth and matching serviettes are available traced ready to embroider on a good quality cream Irish linen; also sheer linen in sky-blue, pink, green, and lemon. The cloth measures 36in. x 36in. and the serviettes measure 11in. x 11in. Price, cloth 19/11 and 1/8 extra for postage and registration. Price, serviettes 1/6 and 3d. extra for postage. The cloth is also available in a large size, viz.: 54in. x 54in. in white linen only. Price 41/11, and 1/10 extra for postage and registration. Serviettes to match, 11in. x 11in. available. Price 1/6 each and 3d. extra for postage.

No. 282.—TABLE RUNNER

A very pretty table runner available traced ready to embroider on a lovely heavy Irish linen in cream; also sheer linen in attractive shades of sky-blue, lemon, green, pink, and white; and a nice British cotton in shades of pink, blue, lemon, and green. Size 36in. in length x 11in. wide. Finish all raw edges with lace edging—this is not supplied. Price, linen 8/11, cotton 6/3. Postage 7d. extra.

281

282

Fashion PATTERNS

PATTERN FOR BEGINNERS

F2018.—Blouse. Beginners' pattern. Requires 2½yds. 36in. material, with 2yds. lace edging. Sizes 32 to 38in. bust. Price 2/6.

F2018

F2020.—Girl's frock. Requires 2yds. 54in. material and ½yd. 36in. contrast. Sizes 18, 20, 23, and 27in. lengths for 2, 4, 6, and 8 years. Price 2/6.

F2022.—Frock. Requires 3yds. 54in. material. Sizes 32 to 38in. bust. Price 3/6.

F2021.—Girl's or boy's longuns with jacket. Requires 4½yds. 27in. material or 2½yds. 54in. material, with ½yd. 36in. contrast. Sizes 18, 19, 20, and 23in. lengths for 2, 3, 4, and 5-6 years. Price 2/6.

F2023.—Frock with matching jacket. Requires 3½yds. 36in. material, with 1yd. 36in. contrasting material. Sizes 32 to 42in. bust. Price 4/6.

FASHION PATTERNS and Needlework Notions may be obtained immediately from Fashion Patterns Pty. Ltd., Ultimo House, 645 Harris Street, Ultimo, Sydney (postal address: Box 4000, G.P.O., Sydney). Tasmanian readers should address orders to Box 660, G.P.O., Hobart. New Zealand readers to Box 660, G.P.O., Auckland.

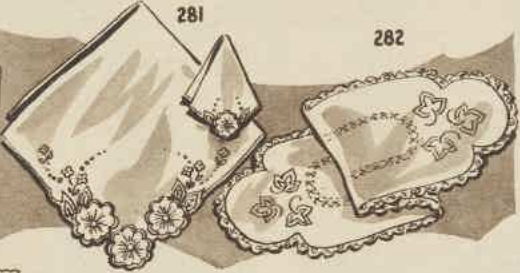
F2019.—Frock. Requires 3yds. 54in. material, with ½yd. 36in. contrast. Sizes 32 to 38in. bust. Price 3/6.

F2022

F2023

F2021

F2020



Music as you EAT!



Pour on the milk!

HEAR those golden

bubbles of flavour go—



Serve the **MERRIEST, CRUNCHIEST** breakfast-cereal of **ALL!**

Every wonderful plateful snaps, crackles and pops with glee! No wonder kiddies love 'em! And remember mum, Kellogg's Rice Bubbles are chockful of nourishment and energy value. Good for all your family. Ask your grocer for Kellogg's Rice Bubbles.

YOUR GROCER HAS THEM!

Kellogg's RICE BUBBLES*

* RICE BUBBLES is a registered trade mark of Kellogg (Aust.) Pty. Ltd. for its brand of oven-popped rice.



THERE'S ONLY **ONE**

Meadow-leaf

TABLE MARGARINE

MAKE SURE THE LABEL SAYS MEADOW-LEAF!

HEAR THIS WOMAN

Ben & Ann Pinchot.

Specially recommended to Women's Weekly readers. From all Booksellers

17/-

SHAKESPEARE HEAD PRESS Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Adelaide

BAKED BEAN and Hamburger Pie

$\frac{1}{2}$ lb. hamburger steak; 2 tbsps chopped celery; 2 tbsps of french beans; 1 clove garlic; 2 small onions; 2 cups Kia-ora Tomato Soup; pinch mixed herbs; 16 oz. tin Kia-ora Baked Beans. Scone mixture made with $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. s.r. flour; 1 oz. shortening and $\frac{1}{4}$ cup milk.

Gently fry steak, chopped onions, celery, beans & crushed garlic until light brown. Remove garlic, place meat & vegetables in casserole with the Baked Beans. Add the Soup, herbs & scone dough, placed in small pieces on top. Bake in hot oven for 20 min. or until scones are done.



Saturday, Sunday, anyday — serve these delicious **Kia-ora** dishes!



Sausage Supreme with SPAGHETTI

2-16 oz. tins Kia-ora Spaghetti;
1 lb. french garlic sausages.

Place sausages, without separating, in saucepan of cold water. Bring to boil; remove from heat at once. Drain & separate; place on Spaghetti in casserole. Bake in moderate oven until Spaghetti is heated and sausages browned. Turn sausages to ensure even cooking.



Keep a well stocked KIA-ORA PANTRY

— it's the basis of an endless variety of delicious meals! Vegetable Soup, Pea Soup with Ham, Celery Soup, Tomato Soup, Tomato Sauce, Spaghetti, Baked Beans, Tomato Juice,

SLICED HAM on thick buttered bread (below) is a good foundation for liver-wurst, tomato, pickled pearl onions, and dill pickle. Mayonnaise and cress add extra flavor. Any other type of cold meat may be used in place of ham.

BROWN BREAD (below) topped with a thin slice of processed cheese is very appetising with thinly sliced salami sausage, sliced gherkin, tiny pickled onions. Or use sliced luncheon sausage and grated cheese moistened with mayonnaise.

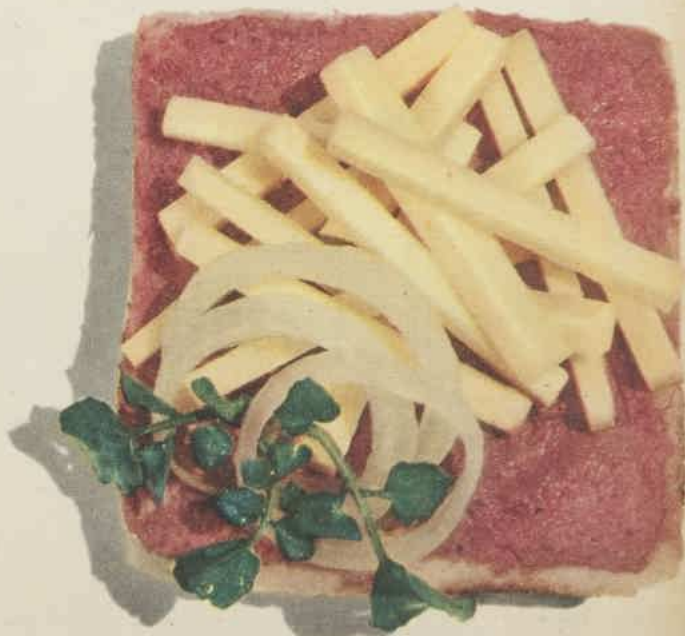
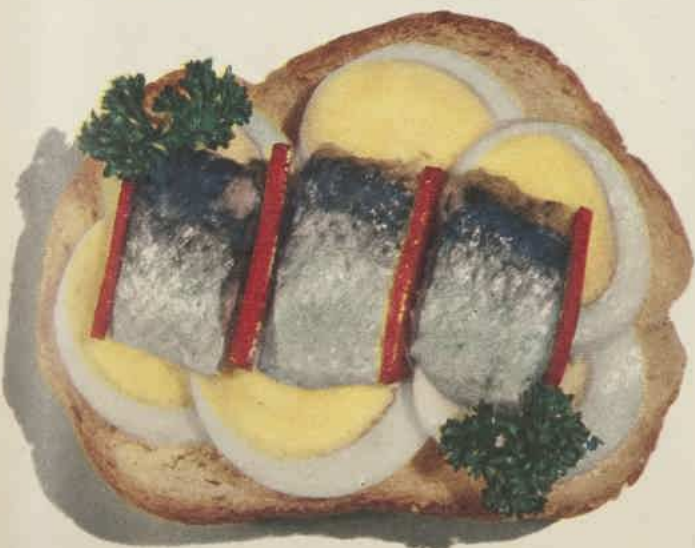


COTTAGE CHEESE (right) may be used without butter for this open-faced sandwich topped with sardines and sliced radish.

QUICK SNACKS

BY OUR FOOD AND COOKERY EXPERTS

• Danish open sandwiches are one answer to the problem of "what shall I serve" for luncheon or a buffet or late evening supper. In Denmark they are eaten with knives and forks, and coffee is served at the same time. The topping may be as hearty as you wish. Make the sandwiches as near serving time as possible.



VIENNA LOAF cut about $\frac{1}{2}$ in. thick and spread lightly with butter is very good with sliced hard-boiled egg, pieces of pickled herring, and thin strips of sweet red pepper. If preferred, use flaked cooked cod moistened with white sauce.

A THICK SPREAD of any fish paste makes an appropriate base for thick slices of large, sweet pickled onion, straws of processed cheese, and a sprig of cress or parsley. Try flavoring the fish paste with lemon juice or grated onion.

JENNIFER picked up the case and brought it over to her grandmother. "Is this the one?" she asked.

"Yes, that's it." The old lady opened it with fingers that trembled so that they could barely serve their function. Inside there was a jumble of souvenirs, the relics of a long life. She rummaged among these things and produced a gold ring set with five diamonds.

"I want you to do a little job for me when you are out, Jenny," she said. "In the New Broadway, two doors on the other side of Paul's patisserie shop, you'll find a jeweller's shop called Evans. Go in and ask to see Mr. Evans himself, and give him this, and tell him that you come from me. He's a very nice man, and he'll understand. He'll give you money for it, whatever it's worth."

She gave a little sigh. "I'm afraid it may not be enough to pay for everything, but you can get a joint of beef and some vegetables, and we'll cook a nice dinner for you. Take my ration-book with you—it's on the corner of the bureau in the drawing-room—and get some flour, and dripping, and sugar, and then we'll make a cake; there's plenty of dried fruit downstairs that dear Jane sends me from Australia."

Again she sighed. "So kind of her, after all these years. And if there's enough money, get a little bottle of claret. A young girl like you ought not to look so pale."

"You mustn't sell your ring," the girl said gently. "Look, I've got plenty of money to carry on with—I've got over thirty pounds in the bank. I'll use some of that, and I'll be telephoning Mummy this morning and she'll send us down some more. I expect Daddy will come down to see you to-mor-

row, when he hears that you're in bed."

Her grandmother shook her head. "Your mother hasn't got any money to spare," she said. "She might have had once, but now with this horrible health service and doctors getting less money than dentists... Sell the ring, my dear. I can't get it on my finger now, I'm so rheumatic, and I shan't want it any more."

The girl put the ring back into the jewel-box. "Leave it there for now," she said. "I promise you I'll come and tell you if we have to sell it. But we shan't have to; we've got plenty of money between us."

She made her grandmother comfortable, then went out with a shopping basket. She got a good breakfast of porridge and fish, and as she breakfasted she made her plans. She had only twelve and threepence in her purse, and her breakfast cost her three shillings of that.

Before she could lay her hands on any more money she must go to Blackheath to get her cheque-book and cash a cheque, and the fare there would be about four and three. That left her about five shillings; she had to telephone her mother, but perhaps she could reverse the charges for the call to Leicester.

The sense of crisis, and the breakfast, stimulated her; she could beat this thing. She went out and rang up her parents; she was early, and the hundred-mile call came through at once. She told her father all that had happened.

He said, "I'll send you a telegraph money order at once for ten pounds. You should get that this afternoon. Either your mother or I will come down to-morrow and be with you some time to-morrow afternoon, and

The Far Country

Continued from page 38

we'll see what's to be done then. It's a bit of a shock, this."

"Don't let Mummy worry over it too much," the girl said. "I think she's probably going to be all right. I'm going now to see if I can talk them into turning on the electricity again. It'll make a lot of difference if we can get a radiator going in her room."

In a quarter of an hour she was talking to the manager in the office of the Electricity Commission, having got past his girl with some difficulty.

"I'm sorry, Miss Morton," he said, "but we have to work to rules laid down by our head office. Two years ago I might have been able to use my own discretion in a case like this, but—well, things aren't the same as they were then. Nationalisation was bound to make some differences, you know. I'm afraid the account will have to be paid before the supply can be reconnected."

She said, "I'm going over to Blackheath to get my cheque-book to-day. I can let you have the cheque first thing to-morrow morning."

"Fine," he said, with forced geniality. "Then we shall be able to reconnect the supply."

"Can't you do it to-day?"

"I'm afraid the account will have to be settled first."

Jennifer said desperately, "She's really terribly ill, and we can't even warm up hot milk in her house, or get hot water for her water-bottles. We must have electricity to-night."

He got to his feet; this was too unpleasant, and he had no power to act. "I'm sorry, Miss Morton," he said. "It sounds as though she would be better in the hospital—have you considered that? Perhaps the re-

lieving officer would be the man for you to see. He's at the Town Hall."

The red-haired girl flared into sudden anger. "I only hope this happens to you one day," she burst out, "that you're old and dying of starvation, and you can't get anyone to help you. And it will, too."

She turned and left the office, white with anger. She shopped carefully with her three shillings, and bought two pints of milk, a few wafer biscuits, and a little sugar; that finished her money. She could get some more food on her way back from Blackheath.

It was urgent to get over there at once, before the bank shut, so that she could get her money. She turned and made for Ladysmith Avenue; on the way she stopped and spent fourpence on a paper, thinking it would give the old lady an interest while she was absent.

Back in the house, the old lady lay exactly as Jennifer had left her; her eyes were shut, and though she was breathing steadily it seemed to the girl that the respiration was fainter than it had been.

Jennifer spoke to her, but she did not answer; however, when she reached into the bed to get the hot-water bottles the old lady opened her eyes.

"Just getting your hot-water bottles, Granny," the girl said. "I'll make you another cup of gruel, too. I brought you a paper."

"So sweet of you," her grandmother said. "I had to give up the papers, but I always go down every morning to look at the Births, Deaths, and Marriages. It's so easy to miss things, and then you write to somebody and they're dead."

Please turn to page 60

Weekly recipe contest

● A hamburger roll rich in flavor, quick to prepare, and reasonably economical wins this week's cash prize of £5.

THIS appetising roll is good for cold weather meals, served hot with vegetables, or for warmer days, served cold with a crisp salad.

A recipe for chocolate trifle wins a consolation prize this week. For "special occasions," decorate it with toasted almonds and strawberries or glace cherries.

HAMBURGER ROLL

One and a half pounds minced round or chuck steak, 2 cups breadcrumbs, 1 teaspoon salt, 4 teaspoon nutmeg, 1/2 teaspoon pepper, 1 egg, 1 clove garlic, finely chopped (or omit garlic and add 2 tablespoons chopped onion), 1 tablespoon chopped parsley, 1 tablespoon tomato sauce, 1 dessertspoon Worcestershire sauce, flour, dry breadcrumbs.

Combine steak, breadcrumbs, salt, nutmeg, parsley, pepper, and garlic or onion. Beat egg, add sauce. Add to meat mixture, mixing well. Turn on to floured board, shape into long, thick sausage. Tie securely in floured pudding cloth, plunge into boiling water. Boil steadily 2 1/2 hours, keeping roll completely covered with water throughout cooking time. Unroll while hot, coat with dry breadcrumbs. Serve sliced.

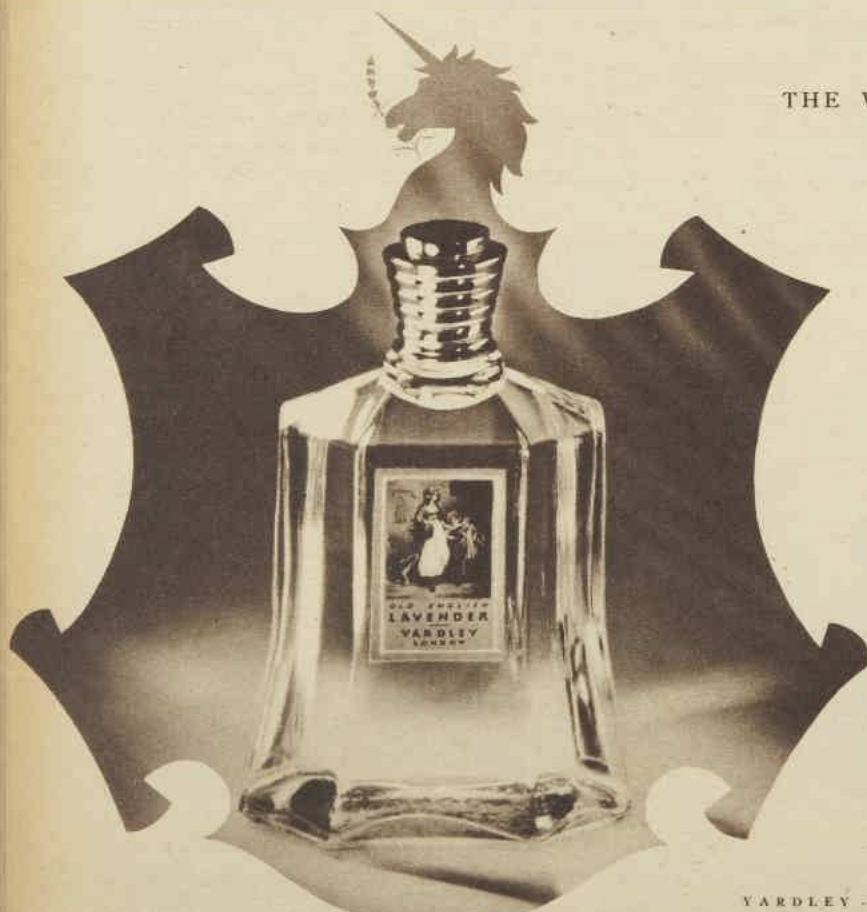
First Prize of £5 to Mrs. Dennis, 56 Beaumaris Parade, Highbury, Vic.

CHOCOLATE TRIFLE

One layer sponge cake, jam, 1/2 cup sherry or orange juice, 1 dessertspoon cornflour, 1 tablespoon cocoa, 1 pint milk, 2 tablespoons sugar, 2 egg-yolks, vanilla essence, 3 bananas, 2 egg-whites, 1/2 cup castor sugar.

Cut cake into fingers, spread with jam. Place in serving-dish, trickle sherry or orange juice over. Allow to stand 1 hour. Blend cornflour and cocoa with a little of the milk. Place balance of milk on to heat, stir in blended ingredients and sugar. Continue stirring until boiling, simmer 2 to 3 minutes. Cool slightly, stir in beaten egg-yolks, flavor with vanilla. Slice two of the bananas, place over cake. Cover with cold chocolate custard. Beat egg-whites and castor sugar to meringue consistency, flavor with vanilla, pipe or spoon on to custard. Chill. Decorate with remaining banana before serving.

Consolation Prize of £1 to Miss M. Oram, Campbell St., Bowen Hills, Brisbane.



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MURDER IN THE FAMILY



Illustrated by RON LASKIE

THE letter had a frightened ring. That was astonishing to Calvin, for Helen had never been a frightened girl; she had been reckless, over-confident. "Something very strange is happening and I need desperately to talk to you. You are a lawyer; you can be detached. I may be imagining things, but it seems, truly, a matter of life and death. Do come to see your aunt, but don't tell her I have written."

Even as astonishing as the words were was the fact that she had written to him. In all the years since their angry parting there had been no letters between them until two months ago, when her child had been killed.

His aunt had written, enclosing clippings of the shocking murder, and he had sent Helen some difficult words of sympathy, and had got back a terse, "Thank you, Calvin," signed "Helen. Cromer."

Helen Cromer was a stranger to him, and that was the way he wanted it. It had been years since he had been in love with Helen Cauldron, and all his young heartbreak and anger were water long over the dam. He had meant never to see her again, never to return to Somerset—he could see his aunt and uncle on their trips to New York.

But this letter was signed "Helen." And the appeal in it he could not refuse. Something was wrong, very wrong, or she would never have written him like that.

Luckily, he could get away at once. August was a fairly slack time and the senior partners were both back. He'd make this his vacation—a fishing trip in Tennessee. Perhaps he could get in a little fishing if this thing of Helen's wasn't too involving.

He began to leaf through the papers on his desk. To-day was Monday. Her letter had been mailed on Saturday. He'd be on the road to-morrow. He'd write that he'd be there by Wednesday afternoon. He'd call up Aunt Abbie at once. "Don't tell her I have written." This was a fantastic thing to be happening.

"It is certainly nice to have you here again." Aunt Abbie said happily.

Calvin Morse had walked in on them at luncheon, and now he and his aunt were sitting on the verandah, waiting for his uncle to join them, to go to Helen's for tea. This arrangement, Calvin found, had been made that morning, when Helen had stopped by for a moment and heard of his visit.

He wondered why she was making it a family party. Probably she wanted to make their meeting seem casual.

Please turn to page 44



MURDER IN THE FAMILY

"Helen wanted us to come early," his aunt was saying. "She said she'd like to consult you about something."

"What sort of something?"

"I don't know. She just said she needed a lawyer's advice, and her own lawyer, Will Bentley, is at a clinic for a check-up. . . . I expect it's something she wants to make over to Burk. For a wedding present."

A wedding present for her brother Burk wasn't a matter of life and death. Then the meaning of the present went home to him, and he said, "Burk marrying?"

"Didn't I tell you? Yes, he's getting married next Wednesday. A week from to-day. It was all very sudden. He's been off and on with this girl for months, and then on Sunday he told Helen they were getting married."

On Sunday, Helen had written on Saturday. But she could have had an idea. . . . "Something very strange is happening." Well, it would all be revealed presently.

His aunt was running on, "That didn't give Helen much time to plan the wedding. She had to write and phone the invitations. But she didn't give many; it will be very quiet, of course."

"But why is Helen giving the wedding?"

"The girl hasn't a mother to give it. And Helen wants to do all she can for Burk. He wouldn't take any money from her—not after that will."

Their father's will, she meant. The will that had made Helen forever inaccessible.

"She's putting a good face on it," said Abbie, "even to me. But she can't be pleased to have her brother marrying that wild Rand girl."

Calvin didn't remember any Rand girl, wild or otherwise. A younger vintage, probably. Burk was his age. Thirty-seven. A few months older, Helen would be thirty-two.

"Though stories about her may not be true," said Abbie conscientiously. "Only there are stories."

"Weren't there some stories about Burk? I seem to remember . . ."

"That's different. And it wasn't the girls that did for him with his father; it was his refusal to go into the pottery works. Peter Cauldron had built up those works all his life and he couldn't understand how a son of his could loathe them. And Burk wouldn't try a month of it. That was right after you left—your last summer."

His last summer. He had been twenty-three then, just graduated from law school, the youngest in his class. Helen was eighteen.

He had come bursting with plans, elated at the prospect of an opening with a good New York law firm, eager to have Helen marry him at once. And Helen had wanted him to practise here in Somerset, with Will Bentley, her father's lawyer—at least for a little time, she said.

She couldn't, she pleaded—she couldn't leave her father now; there was something really wrong with him, though he would not own it. She had to stay near him. She had promised her mother to try to take her place.

The young Calvin Morse couldn't see that anything was wrong with Peter Cauldron except his disposition. He couldn't see anything except that his girl was making excuses not to leave her great house and easy life for the New York walkup, which was all he could offer, and his stung pride told her so.

Hotly, Helen had flared back. It wasn't true. If he could think things like that, he did not love her.

He had hurled back, "It's you who don't love me! But why should you? What have I to offer?" Out of all their sentences he could still remember that, still feel ashamed that he had said it.

"Yes, why should I?" Helen had given back, her grey eyes blazing.

And before their tempers cooled, Lee Cromer came on the scene, blond, handsome and devoted, and he had suffered agonies of jealousy.

On his last night they had parted in hot anger, but though they both told each other it was forever, he hadn't believed it was forever, not until he heard she was to marry Lee Cromer in the autumn.

Then it had been such agony to keep from rushing to her that it was almost relief to have the wedding follow quickly. And to this day he did not know whether she had preferred Lee Cromer or whether he, himself, had thrown her to him.

His thoughts came back to consciousness of Abbie's voice, still recounting the trouble between Burk and his father.

"They had a terrible scene and Burk rushed out of town," she was saying. "And Peter Cauldron sold the works—he knew Lee Cromer wasn't the type to manage them—and made the will that left everything to Helen. He died that spring of cancer."

Vindicating his daughter's fear, Calvin Morse thought. Putting that young, urgent Calvin Morse forever in the wrong.

"That was before Lucy was born," Abbie continued. "And two months after she was born, Lee Cromer died."

"I know. You wrote me." And he had not come back. He did not even write. For what was there to come back to? Helen Cauldron was gone. There was an unreal Helen Cromer, a rich young widow with a baby.

"He was found dead in the woods. He was out hunting and slipped on some rocks and his gun went off under his chin. He was a pleasant fellow," said Abbie reflectively, "but I always thought his looks were the best part of him."

Calvin Morse did not want to talk about Lee Cromer. He said quickly, "Where was Burk all this time?"

"Roaming," she amplified. "His college friends found openings for him, but he never stayed anywhere long. He was in South America when his father died. He wrote Will Bentley he'd break the will, but he knew he couldn't. . . . He never tried. His father had left everything to Helen."

He went on, "Her father left Helen the money outright. And he left the place to her, and then to her children; and if she died and her children died, even then the place wasn't to go to Burk, but to Burk's children. Peter Cauldron had done just what he said he'd do if Burk didn't go into the works."

"No wonder Burk was upset," said Calvin.

"Helen was upset. She'd known her father was leaving her the place, but she hadn't known he was giving her all the money, and she sent some to Burk and he sent it back. Nobody knows where Burk was then, till he went into the Army. He came back—he was a captain then—before he went overseas, and he and Helen patched things up."

"Where was he overseas?"

"Italy, France, Germany; he was there over four years. He was decorated for something, and if his father had lived to know about it, that might have changed things. Two years ago Burk came back, and he's doing quite well in insurance. Quite well for Somerset," said Abbie. "He lives at the Omar House."

"Not at the Polly?"

"Helen asked him, but he refused. Oh, he has his room there and he stays there from time to time—especially since Lucy died. But I don't think he likes John very well."

"John? Oh, John Cauldron. The cousin. I'd forgotten about him. Does he still live there?"

"Oh, yes. Peter left him a house in town, but Helen bought it from him. . . . so he could have the money. I think. He's stayed right on. He's a great help to Helen. That's a big place to keep up. John sees to everything. And he's working on a history of the place, putting old documents together."

"I never saw much of him."

"He was a little older . . ."

Niel Nordstrom came out and Abbie got up briskly. Niel was a quiet, comfortably companionable man, a general practitioner that all Somerset depended on.

They drove off and Calvin followed in his car. He had forgotten, he thought, how beautiful this Tennessee country was. Somerset was in the foothills, the town and its factories spreading down into the valley. Even the smoke of the factories was beautiful at this distance, and all about was green, rolling country with a blur of blue-green mountains against the sky. There were changes along the road, new houses with bright-towered gardens. More tennis courts.

He glanced towards one where Helen and he had played. Bobby-soxers were racing about it now. Betty Meade. That was Burk's flame the last summer he was here.

The road was winding up a wooden ridge. There was a fax farm on the left—that was new—and one or two half-hidden places, and then came what they called the Turn.

Here, the main highway turned sharply to the left, with high-fenced Cauldron land on its right, and a smaller road ran straight on, the Cauldron woods on its left, more open land at the right. The road ended at the Cauldron gates on the left.

There was a filling station at the Turn now, and a fat man in a rocking-chair.

Calvin Morse looked off to the left and thought of the times he had gone along that highway—first on his bicycle, then in his battered little college car—to a certain place where he had parked, climbed the fence and walked a short distance to Cairn's pool, to their Hideaway, as they called it.

He could see a succession of Calvin Morses going up that road, and he shook his head impatiently, feeling as if he had strayed into a Hall of Mirrors. He drove on after the Nordstrom car to the Cauldron gate. His uncle had opened it and was driving on.

Calvin drove through and got out and closed it. He thought: The old routine.

Darkness spread over him, the darkness of deep forest. Great trees, long past their prime, stretched wide branches above a younger growth that twisted fantastically to reach the light.

The road went off to the right, making a wide circle of the climb, then came to a broad reach of level ground. Calvin Morse looked across at Cauldron's Polly and he stopped his car to look again.

It was as beautiful as any building he had ever seen. He'd taken it for granted as a boy and as a young man; then, at the last, he had hated it so much, feeling it was denying him Helen, that he had never felt its beauty.

But now he felt it. He stared at the great stone walls, the high, mullioned windows on which the sun was striking; at the chimneys rising from every part of it, always at the right distance, in the right balance; at the fine square tower, not too high.

He felt the wonder of it there on the incredibly smooth green turf by the cluster of old oaks in which crows were cawing—it was all so amazingly English that he felt he ought to call them rooks. I hadn't a chance, he said to himself. Not against this.

For he was determined to believe the place had separated them—at least, it was the symbol of the thing which had.

The dominance of Cauldron feeling. Her feeling for her father. Young Calvin Morse, early orphaned, brought up at schools, spending his vacations with relatives, had not understood that power of feeling.

He sent his car forward along the straight avenue to the house. The Nordstroms were already out of their car and a girl in white was hurrying towards them. White. He realised now that he had been dreading to see Helen in black.

He parked and went quickly forward, and he and Helen Cromer spoke at once.

"Calvin Morse! How nice . . ."

"Helen! This is . . ."

They broke off, laughing a little. He left the word to her. She said,

her voice a little significant, "I was so glad to hear you were coming."

She had changed and she had not changed. There was the same direct glance, the bright grey eyes with their look of candor and pride. There was the same soft dark hair with the lovely sweep back from brow and temples. There was the hint of mischief in her smile, even with its touch of nervousness.

But her face had thinned, had lost its rounded, childish look. And she was running on with a vivacity his old knowledge of her told him was assumed.

"It was so nice you could come up to-day, and come early," she was saying. "Burk and Rita are coming for tea—Burk just phoned. And John may join us . . . Oh! Here he is now!"

A man had come out of the archway behind them—a thin man so much the color of his tweeds that Calvin thought suddenly of the ginger-bread men his aunt used to make. John Cauldron. The cousin.

"How are you, Morse?" he said as casually as if they had parted the day before, and shook hands with a politeness obviously perfunctory.

He turned to Nordstrom. "I've got a patient for you, Niel. Our stable boy has a bad hand. He got bitten some days ago . . . when the dog was dying. I expect he tried to make him eat. He didn't say anything about it till now, and it's inflamed."

PROMPTLY Niel said, "I'll look at it." He got the black bag he always carried in his car and the two men started off. "I'm worried about Jude," said Abbie Nordstrom.

"Yes," Helen's voice was like a cold hand, warding off feeling. "Yes. I thought he was getting better, but he wasn't." She looked after the men.

"I'd better go with them, if you'll excuse me. Just wait on the terrace." She vanished into the archway.

"She doesn't need to go. But she's like that now. Very tense," said Abbie, looking after her.

"Was Jude the dog?" Calvin asked.

"Lucy's dog. He's been grieving himself to death."

"There used to be some big coach dogs, white with black spots."

"Jude was one of the puppies. He was Lucy's shadow. He went to meet her that night . . ."

They walked along the front of the house to the terrace at the end. They sat down and Abbie looked about at the chairs and tea table.

"This is where we were when it happened," she said. "We'd been having tea. Burk had brought Rita Rand—that was the first we knew he was serious about her. And Rawley was here . . ."

"Rawley? Who's he?"

"He's a young artist who's staying here. Someone Helen got from an art institute to check on the paintings. He's a queer fellow," said Abbie reflectively. "Helen says he can talk on art all right, but never says a word on anything else. But John likes him; he listens to John's old stories of the place."

She stopped, then went on, "That day, I remember, he wore an eye-shade—said his eyes hurt—and there wasn't a word out of him. He had a chip on his shoulder; it seems he had started taking Lucy for walks and Helen had stopped that."

"Lucy? I thought she was just a child."

"Thirteen, and she looked older. She was a pretty thing. Blond, like Lee Cromer. And she was getting to the boy-crazy age."

Calvin drew out his cigarette case and offered it to her.

"Cigarette?"

"Not now. Do you always smoke so much, Calvin?"

"It's intermittent." Not that he minded, he told himself, hearing about Lee Cromer and Lucy Cromer—that didn't mean a thing to him now.

Abbie plunged back into her narrative. "Lucy had gone to the country club with some youngsters for tennis, and after a time John drove off to get her. Helen never liked her motoring about the country with those youngsters. At her age. We sat here, alone with Helen—"

"I thought Burk and his girl—"

"Oh, they went when John did. And Rawley went off for one of his walks. We were talking about Burk and Rita. It was a lovely day, just like this."

Calvin thought restively of saying, "You sent me the clippings," but he did not.

"John came back," Abbie went on. "I remember he drove through the archway to the garage and walked back to us, and at first we thought Lucy had gone into the house. But he said no, that she'd asked to be let out at the gate. She wanted to walk up the path through the woods. You know how the road goes off to the right in that big circle while the path climbs straight up?"

"I remember."

"Helen didn't like her coming through the woods—it was growing dark then—but John said she'd insisted. She was a wilful thing. There wasn't any reason to worry though. It's a steep climb, but Lucy knew every foot of it. We thought she'd be there any moment. Then we heard the dog howling."

She was making it uncomfortably real, he thought, the little group on the terrace waiting for a girl who never came.

"At first it sounded far away. You know how the trees shut out sound. Niel said it was probably the dog at the filling station, but Helen said it was Jude. Jude had slipped away. He always seemed to know where ever Lucy turned in the gate. Helen was in a panic and started down the path, John after her, but Niel got in his car and drove down—he could get to the gate quicker in the car."

For a moment she stopped, her face tense. Then she continued slowly. "I just stood there, listening. I knew in my bones that something had happened, but I kept hoping the child had only twisted an ankle and that Jude was sitting by her, howling for help."

He thought of Helen Cromer running down that path. He asked, "Who found her?"

"Niel. He got to the gate, and the dog was very near there, a little way up the path, just off the path. He was there by Lucy. She was under a bush, as if she'd been pushed there. She must have been jumped on the moment she started up the path. She'd been choked to death, they thought, but later they found her neck was broken."

She added shortly, "Niel said she'd died at once. That was a comfort."

A grim comfort, he thought.

"I expect the man didn't mean to kill, and when he found he had he ran. Or else he heard Jude coming and that frightened him off. I'm sure Jude never saw him or Jude would have killed him. I never saw Niel so shaken as when he came back."

"They got the man, didn't they?"

"Hours later. He was dead drunk—utterly unconscious. He was quite near where Lucy had been lying. They think he circled about, then holed up there, under a rock. He'd finished his bottle there evidently—it was right by him. He says he doesn't remember a thing about it." Abbie gave a deep sigh.

"Well, I didn't mean to talk about it," she finished abruptly.

Helen came back with John, saying that Niel was finishing the ball-dagging, that the bite wasn't really serious, only George mustn't use his hand. She looked at her wrist, watch, then turned to Calvin.

"I want to ask you something . . . to impose on you for some legal advice," she said. "But there isn't time now before tea. Perhaps afterwards?"

Afterwards would be all right, Calvin felt. He had a feeling that that was the way she had planned it.

"And I want to ask you something, Abbie. About those guest lists. Burk telephoned a lot more names, and if I ask them I'll have to ask more of my friends. Would you look through them with me?"

"Of course."

"But Calvin doesn't want to be bored by wedding plans. . . . Perhaps," she said to him, "you'd like to roam about with John. You might like to see what's happening to the gallery. Rawley's supposed to tell us whether we've a collection of fine old originals or fine old copies."

"How's he coming on?" asked Abbie.

"I wouldn't know. He's got half the pictures down, scraping wood and testing canvas thread and pigment," she said to Calvin. "Those are the pictures father brought back from England, you know."

He didn't know or, if he had, he'd forgotten. He walked off with John Cauldron.

"Helen couldn't get the man she wanted," John told him. "That was Lambert. He's famous for this sort of work. But he sent this fellow who'd studied under him and who can take his time. He says we've got a Romney. Helen's just written to the institute to ask if we can trust his judgment."

They entered the house from the terrace and were walking through the long rooms. Calvin said, "I'd forgotten how big this place was."

It was baronial, he thought. Punctured walls and huge stone fireplaces and stags' heads and all the appropriate, heavily carved oak furniture.

"Very vast," said John ironically. "Are you interested in the pictures?"

Calvin said, "Not particularly. Let's go to the tower."

From the second floor at the right of the main stairs a narrow, enclosed stairway led up to the tower. John nodded and opened the door, and they climbed to the top.

It was astounding, Calvin thought, looking down on roofs and chimneys, gardens and fields. Astounding! His eyes rested on the fields stretching from the back of the house to the woods. Not fenced. Separated by old English hedges, ditched on both sides. That took some doing.

"Those hedges," he said. "Did the first Peter do that?"

"He started it. The others kept it up."

"How many have there been? How many generations?"

Three Peter Cauldrons. And then Helen.

"The first Peter do all the building?"

"All of it. He spent a fortune. His wife's fortune," Cauldron said in a dryly amused voice. "At the end, he was selling their high-stepping horses and his wife's jewellery, but the building went on."

"I wonder how she felt about it?"

Cauldron smiled. He had a peculiar smile, a smile that sucked in the corners of his mouth to an air of secrecy, as if accustomed to savoring things in private.

"She left some rather remarkable poems," he said. "Hidden in a drawer I discovered recently. I'm working on the old records. Letters and diaries and accounts. Putting the history together. An antiquarian's obsession."

He went on, "Those poems leave no doubt as to her feelings. They were her only outlet, and she poured herself out in them. In one of them she put a curse upon the place, and threatened to haunt it, gloating at disasters."

Calvin smiled a little. "And did she?"

"There is no evidence of it. I dare say old Peter would have been delighted if she had. It would have made the atmosphere more authentically Old World."

"A gloating ghost. H'm. . . How about the curse?"

John Cauldron seemed to consider quite seriously.

"Well, there are disasters in every generation, aren't there?" he said, and added, "If you live long enough."

"That's right."

"There wasn't money enough left to bury her," John went on. "So her husband and son—that was my grandfather—dug her grave themselves and rolled a boulder to mark it. You can see it down there. At the edge of the rose garden."

Calvin looked. The stone seemed small from that distance.

"Why did he do it?" he said. "I mean, why did he build it? A place of this size. What was in his mind?"

John Cauldron said slowly, "No one knew for a long time. All my grandfather knew was that his father had come from England, that he'd quarrelled with his people there. He was a second son, and he came with little else than letters of introduction and his good looks. He had more than his share of good

looks if his portrait is to be trusted. He brought that portrait with him, by the way."

He shot Calvin a glance that relished the humor of that—young man with a portrait—then added, "And we have more than the portrait's evidence. The poems were constantly railing against his good looks. One of them, I remember, reviled the 'dastard charm, proud, devil-driven eyes!'"

He quoted it with satiric enjoyment. Calvin thought. Calvin said, "I'm on her side. She had a thin time—Did the poems say why he built this place?"

"No. No; she didn't know the reason. That was found out in Uncle Peter's time. Peter the third, he was. He was interested in the past and encouraged me to go through the old papers."

Quite objectively, he went on to explain, "I was a sickly boy, with a passion for books, so I spent most of my time in the library. As you may remember?"

"I'm afraid I don't. I wasn't very noticing."

"Most people are not noticing. Well, I unearthed old diaries and records, and one day I found a worn print of a place I thought was this. Then I noticed a difference of details and of the position of trees. I'm not boring you?"

"No; I'm asking for it."

"It is interesting, rather. The motives that impel us. You see, we found that engraving was of the old Cauldron place in England. Cauldron Hall."

JOHNS last sentence was spoken quietly but impressively, and Calvin's brows shot up in surprise. "The place his older brother had inherited?" he said.

"That's it. I expect Peter had lived there as a boy. Perhaps he expected to go on living there after his brother had inherited, and, instead, his brother had booted him out. Blood," said John Cauldron dispassionately, "is not always thicker than water."

"How right you are," he said. "Or perhaps he had expected to inherit it himself. The heir might have been sickly or given to horses likely to break his neck. Such a hope is understandable," he said with an offhand laugh.

He added, "But this is all conjecture. All we actually know is that there was some quarrel between the brothers and that Peter Cauldron flung himself out of England and came here. And here, stone by stone, he recreated his old home."

There was a magnificence about the achievement that almost made Calvin forgive the man's beguiling the wife under the boulder.

"And I am convinced," said John Cauldron with quiet enjoyment, "that he let his brother know. At a printing house in Philadelphia he had a pamphlet made, describing the place, and somewhere he had an engraving made. I found copies of them here and I feel positive that he sent them to England, though there is no record there. I expect his brother tore them up."

"Oh, you got in touch?" Calvin asked.

"Uncle Peter did. He went over to England and looked up his cousins and saw the Hall. That was twenty years ago. Twenty-two years. He brought back a number of paintings he'd bought from them—mainly portraits—and some furniture and tapestries. He didn't claim the tapestries were historic, but I'm afraid he did a little pretending about the pictures. That's why we—why Helen is having them examined."

"Can't you check? The family at the Hall could tell you whether the originals were sold or not."

John Cauldron did not answer for a moment. Then he said, "The Hall is gone. A direct hit."

And he was pleased as Punch about it, Calvin thought. He was fighting old Peter Cauldron's battle.

"I've talked too much," John Cauldron said. "Burk must be here—a car came in some few minutes ago. We won't have time for the gallery."

But as they came out from the enclosed stairway he said, "We might have a look in," and walked across the open space at the head of the main stairs to the door.

The gallery was a long room, not

well lighted, for its windows that open towards the back were deeply recessed. It was on those window seats, Calvin remembered, that he and Helen had torn each other's feelings to shreds.

"When Peter built this," said John Cauldron, "there was only his own portrait to hang in it."

It was either magnificent or ludicrous, the idea of the long gallery with one solitary picture on its walls. Calvin remembered the walls as crowded. Now half the pictures were down, some of them stacked along the floor.

He crossed to look at the first picture and saw a small, dark canvas out of which looked the face of a willful, handsome boy with bold features, black hair and brilliant grey eyes that followed you mockingly.

Burk, when young, could have sat for it," said John.

His voice was too detached, too expressionless. That's the knife in his back, Calvin thought, as John remarked, "I see our expert has fled his post. Shall we go down?"

Tea was in progress on the terrace. Burk Cauldron was there with his girl. She was the sort of girl, thought Calvin, that in blithe moments you address as "Gorgeous" or "Beautiful."

Her hair was bright as new-minted copper. She was definitely a dazzer, with hazel eyes and a curved mouth done in the same color as her hair. She looked about eighteen.

Burk had hardened, he felt. But he was a handsome fellow, with the willful look of the Peter Cauldron in the portrait, the same mocking brilliance in his grey eyes.

He gave Calvin Morse a look in which Calvin felt something hostile, though his words were cordial: "Ah, Calvin, my boyhood pal. . . Rita, this is Calvin Morse."

Rita Rand smiled briefly, then her glance shifted to someone behind Calvin. A young man was coming out of the house, hurrying a little, one shoulder thrust ahead of the other, his head slightly tilted.

He had an odd, arresting face. It seemed almost familiar to Calvin. He had the feeling that he ought to remember something about that face, but the association eluded him. Inexplicably the words "bare feet" popped into his mind.

This was Rawley, he discovered. When Helen presented them, Rawley gave him an unsmiling look, and there was something wary in his eyes, but perhaps, he thought, eyes got that way from searching for painted frauds.

"And you know the Nordstroms," Helen was saying to Rawley, "and you've met my brother and Miss Rand."

"I think I saw you one day in the gallery," said Burk. "But you've been so busy—"

"We met him once at tea," said Rita Rand.

It was the way she stopped that reminded Calvin that the tea had been the day Lucy was killed.

"Did we?" said Burk vaguely. He had given Rawley only the minimum of attention, and now he turned to his sister with the air of resuming a discussion.

"So you don't think highly of the idea of our occupying the south wing?" he said lightly, ironically.

"No, Burk, I don't." She was saying it pleasantly, trying, Calvin thought, not to show discomfort, but she did show it. She kept her eyes on the tea she was pouring and said, "Let's not—"

"But you once invited me."

She passed a cup to Calvin, filled one for Rawley. She said, "I know. But that's different. No house is large enough for two families."

Burk gave a deliberate, quizzical look at the house. "Not even the Folly? My dear Helen, give some other reason than size!"

She murmured, "It's still only one house. It has only one kitchen."

"Vast enough for a battalion of cooks."

"That has nothing to do with it, Burk. It's as I said—no two families can live happily in one house."

There was a moment's silence. Then Burk said, "What about our John?" He spoke as if John Cauldron were not there. "Isn't our John another family?"

"John isn't married."

"Ah! Then the objection is to—"

"Not to any individual," Helen said quickly. "Rita knows that. Rita knows that no house can be run by two women."

"Rita has no aspiration to run it, my dear Helen."

The girl gave an unexpected laugh. "I'll say I haven't! I don't even want to live here."

For an instant, Helen looked astonished. Then she flashed a look of relief and triumph at her brother.

Burk's face tightened. He turned towards the girl.

"But to please me?" He said it in a light, derisive way in which there was something menacing.

Calvin expected the redhead to flash back, but she said instantly, trying to match Burk's lightness, but not making a good job of it, "Oh, to please you. . . of course!"

"It would please me," said Burk decisively. He was saying it to them both. Then directly, to his sister.

"It's what I want, Helen."

But Helen wasn't giving in, though she looked upset.

"It wouldn't work out," she insisted stubbornly. "You know that, Burk. This isn't fair of you. You know we couldn't get along if we tried to live together. There isn't help enough as it is—Henry and Ida are old. And Dolcey can't do more than she does. You've no idea how much I do. It isn't the way it was when father was making money."

"Or if I'd gone into the pottery to make money! But we'd pay for our crusts of bread."

"You know it wouldn't work out," Helen repeated. "You'd be happier in a place of your own. In fact—"

She glanced about, confused and flushed.

"Oh, let's not go into it now," she ended shortly.

"We're already in it, my dear little sister. Have you run out of reasons? I assure you I would not be happier anywhere else."

"I'm sorry," she said in a low voice. "I thought you'd want a place of your own. And I—I'd meant it for a surprise—but it's that house in town that father left John. I bought it back. And I thought you'd like it for a wedding present."

Burk was staring at his sister.

"You were really thinking of giving me that?" he said, with an exaggeration of sceptical delight. "You were actually going to give me that house in town?"

Like lightning his anger broke its cover. "The Always-Right! Helen! Helen the Invincible! Oh, how clever you were, Helen; how very clever to poison my father's mind so completely! To get everything left to you!"

HELEN grew very white. She said in a strained voice, "I didn't poison father's mind, Burk."

"No?" Burk sneered.

"No!" she said more vehemently. "You know I didn't. You know I begged you to go into the works. I begged you to do what he wanted."

"But afterwards? After I was gone?"

"I didn't poison his mind. That's an abominable thing to say. He told you what he'd do if you refused. You had your choice. You were the one who made the choice."

"My choice! What choice? The business was another affair—another affair entirely. I loathed the business. But the Folly! I had a right to the Folly!"

"But he told you—he warned—"

"He had no right to crack the whip. To make the two things one. I was his son."

"I was his daughter," said Helen, spirited now. "I'm as much a Cauldron as you are!"

"Are you? Are you a Peter the Fourth? I was. Peter Burk Cauldron. Nor did you produce a son. If father had lived to know that—"

Helen's head went higher, her face even whiter at the reference to Lucy. She struck back, "Oh, give me time!"

John Cauldron moved.

"I'd better telephone White," he said across the table to Helen, his sane, sensible voice ignoring the passion in the air. "We'll have to get

back that boy he borrowed. George can't use his hand. I'll see to it." He walked into the house.

Burk Cauldron stared after him until the french windows had closed behind him; then his eyes flicked back to his sister.

"At home here, isn't he?" he said sharply. "If he had the Cauldron good looks, one might suppose that was the reason you haven't married again."

Helen said confusedly, "Well, he hasn't the Cauldron good looks." She seemed to be trying to pull herself together, to speak lightly. "You'd have some trouble, Burk, to get that story believed."

"Oh, I don't know. . . . A hopeless passion. . . . You couldn't marry, because of the talk—living here like brother and sister. It has its possibilities," he said in a laughing voice.

Helen gave up lightness. She said stiffly, "I wouldn't advise you, Burk, to try to injure me."

"No? But I think I shall some day, Helen." He got up and smiled directly at her—a hard, bitter smile. "I think some day I'll bring home to you what it means to be hurt. Really hurt."

He turned to Rita Rand. "We'll be going now."

The girl jumped up, glancing about uncertainly, her lips putting on a formal, embarrassed smile. As her eyes met Calvin's, she gave him a strangely searching look.

Abbie Nordstrom said cheerfully, "We'll hope for good weather next Wednesday."

It seemed fantastic to Calvin Morse that after these fireworks there would be a wedding here at all, but that seemed still the idea.

Helen said to the girl, her voice only a little strained, "I'll call up about those names. I'll call tomorrow morning."

Burk and Rita went to their car. Young Rawley spoke.

"I think I'll go for a walk," he said to no one in particular, and disappeared around a corner of the house.

"Well—" said Helen, rather helplessly. She looked about the diminished circle and tried to smile. "That was quite a tea party, wasn't it?"

Abbie Nordstrom said firmly, "You were perfectly right. It wouldn't have worked. Now Niel and I will be running along. You'll want to have your talk with Calvin."

When they had gone, Helen and Calvin sat looking at each other across the table. Henry, the white-haired butler, looking no older than Calvin remembered him, carried off the tea things and brought drinks.

"You'll want something stronger than tea after all this," Helen had said with a faint laugh. Now that they were alone she seemed at a loss how to begin.

He prompted, "What is it, Helen? What is worrying you?"

She looked quickly to the house to make sure the door was shut. "It's so many things."

"Well, what's the first?"

She said uncertainly, as she had said in her letters, "You may think I'm imagining things."

"All right," he said cheerfully. "I may think you're imagining things. But what things? That letter of yours—that sounded serious."

She moved her glass an inch, then another inch, concentrating on it carefully.

When she spoke, her voice was very low and carefully controlled. "The first thing is I think they've made a mistake in the man they've arrested. I think he didn't do it. I don't think he's the one who killed Lucy."

"You don't?" He looked at her in astonishment. "Why, they found him there, didn't they?"

"Yes, but it was hours afterwards—hours. And he says he never came into the woods until later."

"But that's a matter for the law."

"The law might make a terrible mistake," she said, her voice trembling a little now.

He looked at her in perplexity. "It isn't up to you to—"

"Lucy was my child. And it would be the final horror to me to have someone who was innocent suffer

MURDER IN THE FAMILY

for her death. I could not bear that, Calvin! I could not bear that." Then she fought back the feeling that was shaking her.

"I didn't mean to talk like this," she went on. "I'll tell you quietly. They think it's this boy—he's only a boy, really—"

"Is it someone you know?" he asked quickly.

"Oh, no. It isn't because of that. I only knew him to speak to. He'd only been here a few weeks before. He had a job with old Hobbs, at the filling station at the Turn."

She broke off, catching her breath. Then slowly, controlling her voice carefully, she went on. "He walked off towards our place, Hobbs says, after John drove past towards the country club to get Lucy. So he could have got to the gate before she did. But he says he wasn't in the woods till later. He says he has an alibi."

"But he doesn't give it?"

She shook her head. "No. But he wrote me this letter." From a bag beside her she drew out a paper and gave it to him. "You read it."

It was written in a round, almost childish hand. Calvin read:

"Dear Mrs. Cromer: I want to tell you right off that I never did such a dreadful thing. I can prove I never did, because I was with a certain young lady at the time and never came into your woods until much later. But I don't want to tell this unless I have to, because it will make things hard for that young lady. But I can't bear to have you thinking I did such a thing, so I am telling you the truth. I feel awfully bad for you."

"Sincerely, Tex Miller."

"It's such an honest-sounding letter," Helen was saying.

Even at eighteen she had never seemed so young, and he looked at her compassionately.

"You can't tell a thing by that, Helen," he said gently. "If he has an alibi, he'd better produce it."

"She's probably married."

"Hard luck for her, but it can't be helped. And there may not be anyone at all."

"Oh, but there is!" Helen declared positively. "I've had letters from her. Anonymous letters. Two of them. This was the first."

It was typed carefully on plain paper.

"Dear Mrs. Cromer: I beg you to read this. I beg you to believe me when I tell you that Tex Miller is innocent. He was with me that night till long after the dog howled. I will come forward and tell this if I must at the trial to save him, but it will ruin everything in my life."

"He had no right to be with me. So I have been keeping quiet, hoping the real criminal will be found. It was not Tex. It was someone else. It could be some boy from the country club, someone Lucy was dating without your knowing it. Some of those boys are wild when they've been drinking."

"Oh, Mrs. Cromer, please, please look for some clue among Lucy's things. Maybe she kept a letter that would show who he was. Oh, please look."

The second letter was a shorter but even more frantic appeal for a search for a clue.

Calvin looked up: "You've no idea who sent this?"

She shook her head. "No idea in the world."

"Typewriting can be traced. But the police must know whom he's been seeing."

"They say there's no one in particular—that he was friendly to a lot of girls, but only casually. Sutton—that's the sheriff—said that he was sweet bait." Helen's inflection put the words in quotes.

"No one seems to know much about him," she went on. "He hitch-hiked in. But doesn't that letter sound real to you?"

She paused, and when he didn't answer, she went on. "I thought it did. And I did look for clues—I looked through everything. But there wasn't a thing. Just letters from girls at camp and programmes of school parties and old valentines and lists of things to take to school."

She was going away to school this autumn."

He said, distressed. "Don't, Helen! Don't tear yourself to pieces over this. The trial will decide it. The truth will come out then."

"But don't you see? If he's innocent, that man, the one who really killed Lucy, is still free. And he's somewhere about here."

"That doesn't follow."

"But he is, Calvin! And he's trying to kill me!"

She said it softly but tensely, with a quiet conviction that held him in shocked silence for a long moment. "What makes you say that?" he asked at length.

"There are things happening."

"What sort of things?"

Her eyes met his.

"They don't sound like much . . . at first," she said. "I'll tell you. The first was the night Lucy died. I'd been sitting by her—Jude and I. I wanted to be alone. Then I went to my room and shut the door between us. Not to shut her out, her voice faltered pathetically, 'but to be by myself, to get my courage together.'"

"There was some milk on a tray—that was all I'd asked for—and there was a pill Niel had sent up. Niel and Abbie were staying all night . . . and Burk. But I couldn't see them. I wanted to be alone."

Her tenseness was painful. He said gently, "But what happened?"

"I drank the milk and took the pill. I had a feeling not so much of going to sleep, but of blacking out. Later—it was much later—I woke up choking, smothering. I could hardly wake. But Jude was barking and lunging against the door. He woke up the whole house and everybody came running."

"I said I'd had a nightmare. I must have cried out in it and Jude heard. That's what I thought it was then. A nightmare. But now—"

"Now?"

"Now I don't know," she said uncertainly. "I can't be sure, but I had such a feeling of being smothered. As if that man had got in my room."

"But how could he?"

"Anyone could have got in that night and hidden. It would have been the safest place for him to hide. But I only began to think that after the other things. After I was followed."

"Tell me about that."

"There were several times. Oh, but first, there was something else. I was riding the new colt—Burk thought it would do me good to get out on him. I was in our own woods. And something—a stone, I think—whizzed out and hit him. He went up in the air and nearly threw me. I wasn't prepared. At it happened so fast I couldn't be sure what hit him, but it was something good-sized."

A DREAM. A stone at a horse. He looked at her doubtfully.

He said, "Some boy might have been shying rocks. Not knowing you were there."

"Yes. Yes, it could have been like that. But it all adds up. The attempts—"

"What about being followed?"

"That was when I went out by myself. I was pretty restless and I used to walk it off, in the woods, beyond the fields. At first Jude went with me, but he got too weak. And I began to hear sounds, crackling sounds, a stick breaking, as if underfoot—things like that. The first time I was sitting by a stream and it was right near me."

"I jumped up and crossed on stepping stones and took another way back. But after that, on other walks, I heard them again, cautious little sounds. As if someone was following. And I had the feeling of being watched. It made me turn and go back. I never went very far into the woods . . . until that last time."

She had been talking in a low monotone, her eyes lowered, her dark head bent, but now she looked directly at him.

"It doesn't sound like much, does it? You'll think I'm silly, will you?"

"You tell me what happened," he said.

"This was last week. That's what made me write you. I went quite far that day. I think I wanted to prove I wasn't frightened; I've never been frightened about things before. You know that, Calvin." Her voice was taut.

"I didn't hear anything at first, and then, it was just the tiniest sound, but it was quite sharp. A stick cracking underfoot. That's what it sounded like. I looked back and there was a branch moving . . . in a bush beside the path. As if it had sprung back in place. I told myself it was a deer. I made myself go on. But I heard another sound. And I had the feeling—do you know that feeling?—the feeling of being watched. And then I heard someone moving in the bushes."

She looked up again and said absurdly—he remembered that way of hers of tossing in that question—"And do you know what I did? I began talking out loud, as if talking to a dog. I said, 'Toby'—that's the name of our farmer's dog—'why, how did you get here?'"

She smiled forlornly. "The woods were so thick you couldn't see whether there was a dog in the path or not, and Toby's short . . . though he's fierce. I kept saying, 'Why, they will think you're lost. Come on back, Toby.' And I whirled around and ran back. And I hadn't imagined those sounds, Calvin. I know the wood sounds."

Yes, she knew wood sounds. He was silent, considering.

"I went back the next day. I took Carl, one of our hands, telling him I'd lost something and he must help me find it. And I looked in the bush I'd seen waving—I knew the one—and someone had been there. You could see where ferns had been pressed down. And once there was a footprint."

Calvin said slowly, "It could have been someone after a rabbit."

"But he followed . . . all those times."

He said bluntly, "It could be nervous. Or it could be fact. I should think the thing to do was to have those woods searched. Haven't you had that done?"

"That would take a lot of men."

"But the sheriff—haven't you been to the police?"

"No, no. You see . . . I went to him about those letters. John didn't want me to—he thinks I'm crazy to believe in them. He said they were an obvious hoax, a play for sympathy. John and Sutton too—that's the sheriff—are utterly convinced that it's Tex Miller. Sutton just laughed at those letters . . . So I didn't tell John about being followed."

She added almost bitterly, "He thinks I'm all worked up, anyway, and he wants Niel to give me something for my nerves. It's just that John—"

She broke off, then flung out, "John's so afraid that I'll ask Burk to move in with us that he almost wants me to break down, so he can manage things!"

Then she said, "Oh, I don't mean that! Only John is too anxious about me. He's afraid of my being too depressed. He went and took the revolver out of my room—Lee's old thirty-eight. I made him give it back. I'm not going to do anything foolish; I've got a lot to live for."

"You've got everything—"

"But if I'd told him about being followed," she swept on, "he'd believe I was imagining it. So that's when I wrote you, Calvin. You've got a legal mind and you'd be detached."

"Not too detached," he said a little wryly. "Anything that touches you, Helen, still touches me. But what can I do? I can't tell you for a fact whether you were followed or not."

"I know. But you can see Tex Miller and tell me whether you think he's guilty or not. If you think he's telling the truth, then I'll go to the sheriff and make him comb those woods. But if you think he's guilty, then I'll know there isn't anybody hiding there."

Her voice became pleading.

"It isn't that I am so afraid of being killed, Calvin. But I'm so afraid of some terrible mistake . . . injustice. You can tell me what to believe."

It was preposterous and it was pitiful. He tried to make her see

that no snap judgment he could make would have a shred of value.

But he was so sorry for her, so moved by the haunted look in her grey eyes, that he said he would go, that he would try to gain some impression.

In her relief, she looked so spent that he said gently, "Go to bed early to-night, Helen. Get some sleep."

"Yes, I will. I haven't been sleeping very well. I asked Niel for a sleeping pill and he said he'd bring me one. You'll let me know as soon as you've seen Tex Miller, won't you? Sutton will arrange it, if he knows I've asked you . . . or his lawyer, Regan, his name is. You'll let me know right away?"

"I'll let you know. Sleep well."

Sleep well. Her mind echoed it ironically, then wistfully. Yes, she might sleep now. It was a relief to have told Calvin Morse. She had been sure that he was the one person she could tell who would not laugh at her.

She had been going on for too long, she thought, trying not to show what she was feeling, and now all the tiredness that she had been holding at bay was overpowering her.

Slowly she walked through the long rooms of the house, feeling a bleak disinclination for every hour ahead of her.

Dinner with John. He would be worried for fear she would give in to Burk—he knew her abrupt reversals so well—and he would want to argue, to strengthen her against Burk. She couldn't bear that to-night.

And Rawley might come to the table. That young man baffled her. She had the feeling of something pent up in him and she had the feeling that he disliked her. She had felt that before she stopped those walks of his with Lucy.

OF course she'd had to stop them. He was a stranger, and Lucy was so young and eager; he ought to have asked her before he took the child out into the woods. Perhaps he had liked Lucy, and his resentment and his feeling for Lucy were making him so stiff.

Two months now—he had been in the house for more than two months now—and still he was a stranger to her. He had never said one thing about his personal life. Except that he lived alone, that his people were dead. He was easy to be with only when he talked about painting.

No, she couldn't bear John or Rawley to-night. She turned up the broad stairway in an impulse to flight; then, her hand on the rail, she stopped as Henry spoke below her. He had been answering the telephone, which was on a table in a corner of the big hall.

"Mr. Burk rung up," he reported. "He says he's coming back to dinner. Not his young lady, though. He's staying here all night."

That settled it. She couldn't talk any more to Burk. He was coming either to argue again or to say he was sorry—he had been outrageous, and he knew it—but whatever it was, she couldn't stand that either.

"All right, Henry," she said. "But I'm not coming down to dinner. My head aches. I don't want to see anyone. Ask Ida to bring me up a tray—just a sandwich and some milk and a vacuum bottle of coffee. Oh, and, Henry—"

"Yes, Miss Helen?"

"The doctor's bringing me some medicine later. Have Ida bring it up."

She went upstairs. Her room was at the front of the house, not the master bedroom, unused except for guests since her father's death, but a large room that had always been hers, which she and Lee Cromer had shared for a year.

Lucy's room was next to it, with a connecting door, and she went into it, as she went every night, and looked about at the smooth, empty bed, the vacant tidiness.

That night when they had brought Lucy in there had been a plate of fudge on the table and a French schoolbook open, with a smudged page, *Le Livre de Mon Ami*.

She shut the door to Lucy's room; she tried to shut the door of her mind.

It was lonely without Jude. He

had slept in her room after Lucy died, until he grew too feeble, suddenly, to climb the stairs.

He had seemed to be growing better, but he hadn't been growing better. He had died a little over a week ago.

Slowly she undressed, then went into the big dressing-room which her grandfather had made into a bathroom, and ran the water for a hot bath.

When she emerged from the bath she found that Ida had left a tray beside the bed, and opened the bed. She got in and lay back against the pillow. She was not hungry; she did not want to eat or drink. There had been all that cake and tea and the drink afterward. She was tired but not sleepy.

She thought about Calvin Morse. He was kind—he had always been kind under that quick temper of his—and he had a good mind. He would find out the truth.

It was too bad there had been that scene at tea. Burk—but she was not going to let herself think about Burk. Burk would be happier after he was married. Only, why were he and that girl so strange together? It had been different their first time here.

Well, that didn't matter. All that mattered now to her, she told herself, was this dreadful trial.

She closed her eyes and tried to empty her mind. After a time there was a knock on her door, then it opened and she looked up to see Niel Nordstrom.

"I brought your pill," he said. "Henry said you didn't want to see anyone, but doctors are exceptions."

"Of course," she smiled up at him. "It's only tiredness, isn't it? You're not feeling ill?"

"Only tiredness."

"Then I won't keep you from sleep. But I want to tell you again how much I appreciate that ten thousand for the hospital wing."

Niel had always been at her for money for the hospital. He was a fanatic about the hospital, about the people who needed it. She had given the ten thousand in Lucy's name.

He was smiling a little tensely. "Of course it ought to be more! I need a hundred thousand."

"That's half of what I have. You'll have to wait until I die."

"I don't want to wait. I'd rather see you getting along on half. This place doesn't need it as much as—"

He broke off.

"Ungrateful, aren't I? Here's your pill. I'll put it on your tray."

He was gone and she sat up and looked considerably at the pill. She did not seem to need it now. If she woke up later, she would need it. Her sleep lasted only about four hours.

She poured out a cup of milk and drank it slowly. She filled the cup again, then put down the cup without drinking from it. She did not want more milk. She picked up the vacuum bottle of coffee, then reflected that if she opened it now, it would be cold by early morning, and she might wake early. She put the bottle down unopened, leaned back and closed her eyes.

Suddenly—it seemed quite suddenly—she felt an overpowering heaviness of sleep.

Slowly, slowly, Helen came back to semi-consciousness. She was dreaming a dreadful dream, a dream of drowning.

She was awake enough to feel it was a dream, that she must struggle out of it, but the dream still held her, stifling her under fathoms of water. She was trying to breathe and she could not breathe. She was drowning . . .

No, she was choking. She was still under water, but she wasn't drowning, she was choking.

One of those awful creatures, an octopus, a monster with reaching arms, had a long tentacle about her throat, shutting off air. But this was only a dream.

She could feel it was a dream; she could even remember that she had experienced this choking horror in a dream before. But still she could not throw it off.

She could realise that the octopus was a dream, still she felt unable to breathe; she felt something smothering was over her face, that she was sinking back to unconsciousness.

Then, suddenly, the pressure was gone. The down-bearing weight. She made a violent exertion—it seemed to her violent, but it was no more than a movement of her head—and something heavy slid from her face. The pillow. She was conscious that she was lying awake, panting, conscious that there was a loud ringing in her ears.

No, it was in the air. The telephone. The bell rang in the front hall downstairs and up here beside her bed, on the extension. The telephone had awakened her.

Steps were running along the hall down the stairs. Who could be phoning at this hour? But what hour was it? Her windows were pale columns, white with moon.

The other time it had been the dog that had waked the household. Now the telephone.

It had happened again. Whatever the meaning, it had happened again.

Her door opened softly. Ida's voice said, "I know that waked you, Miss Helen. You want anything?" "No," her voice sounded thick and fuzzy. "What was it?"

"Mr. John's downstairs taking it. It's a telegram, I think. Pretty time of night for it," said Ida scornfully. "All right," her voice really was thick. Ida would think it sleepy sounding.

"Good-night, Miss Helen, dear." Why hadn't she said, "Run to the door; see where he went! Look through the house!" You lie there gasping, and say, "All right; you pretend that nothing horrible had happened."

But she wasn't being hysterical. It had really happened. Her breath had been almost gone. She still felt queer all over. And her nose was sore. As if it had been squashed.

She put up a hand and touched it. This wasn't nerves. But she'd have to think about it carefully. To make sure.

She waited till John had time to hang up, to go back to his room, then she put on her bed lamp. She propped herself up on one elbow, feeling dizzy when she moved. Coffee would clear her head. She felt eager for some coffee.

She lifted the bottle. It was light. Could Ida have forgotten to fill it? No, it had been heavy last night. She was sure it had been heavy. She unscrewed the cap and took out the cork and tilted the bottle over a cup.

Not a drop came out. It was empty. She felt so weak, so craving for stimulant that she could have cried.

She put down the bottle. Some milk then—milk would be better than nothing. She had poured out a cup of milk last night and left it on the tray. It wasn't there. Both cups were empty.

Queer. She was sure she had not drunk it. Could she have poured it back? She looked into the pitcher and it was empty. The pitcher held two cups exactly.

She felt bewildered. And then the meaning rushed through her. Of course, sleep was not enough. Nor one pill. And she had not taken the pill, though it was gone now. There had been something in the milk.

Terror poured through her; a terror unreasoning, she tried to tell herself, because now she was awake, the household was awake.

The telephone had saved her. He had not dared hold down the pillow an instant more.

But where was he? She looked about her room in panic. Those draperies at the side of the window, those draperies in shadow, at any moment something would creep out of them. No, he would wait till she was asleep.

She got out of bed. She must move unhurriedly, she told herself, not to seem alarmed. She lurched against the post of the bed, and caught it to steady herself. She was drugged. Her head felt clear, but her feet were uncertain. But they would carry her.

Gingerly she moved to her desk. She pulled open a drawer, picked up quickly the revolver there. She felt better then. She steadied herself and faced the dressing-room.

The door was ajar. She flung it open, her eyes straining into the dim interior. The moon was white on the fixtures. Her fingers crept

to the jamb and turned on the light. No one was there. There were her towels, the brasserie she had left on the low chair.

She went back and put on the lights in her room. She opened the door into the hall, so that a cry could be heard, and moved slowly, systematically about the hiding place. No one was hidden.

She looked toward Lucy's door. But now she felt exhausted. She dragged a chair against the door and wedged it beneath the knob. She looked about her, her heart still thudding heavily, and felt a terror of the dark house outside her door, and hurried to close and lock the door into the hall.

Her own room, lighted, strong-walled, searched, seemed now her only safety. She got back into bed and thrust the pillow on the floor. She would lie there and wait, she thought. And try to arrange her thoughts.

But in a few moments the wave of heavy drowsiness drew her back to sleep.

She awoke to a sun-flooded room. She felt surprisingly rested, as if she had slept a long time. Nine o'clock.

Indeed she had slept long. She got up, unlocked her door, put the revolver back. She went to the bathroom and let cold water fill the tub. Then she heard Ida's voice and looked out.

Ida, small and dark, in her bright blue dress and white apron, was a symbol of the normal, reassuring day. Ida was carrying out her tray, asking if she could bring breakfast.

"No, I'll be down," Helen told her. "Mr. John says he wants to talk to you as soon as he can."

"All right. Oh, Ida! Is there a pill on that tray? A yellow pill?"

There was a moment's wait. "No pill," said Ida.

Downstairs at the little breakfast table by the window, she thought about it, drinking her coffee and listening absently to the prosaic hum of the vacuum cleaner.

A frenzy of cleaning was going on in preparation for the wedding; Ida had impressed Joe and Carl, the field boys, into rubbing the woodwork, and the air crackled with her brisk directions: "Lively, boy! Go into that carving. . . . What's that? It's a griffin, but never you mind what that is! You get the dust out of his mouth."

John Cauldron came in and sat by her. He asked, "How are you, Helen? How's the headache?"

"The headache?" She had forgotten the headache. "Oh, that's gone."

"That's good. . . . But you don't look too well."

"I kept dreaming; I didn't sleep well. . . . Where's Burk?"

"He left early. Before breakfast."

"He didn't say anything more, except about the wedding," said John.

John always seemed to know the question she wanted to ask, she thought, relieved by the information. He asked, "Did that telephone wake you last night?"

"Yes. What was it? Ida said something about a telegram."

He looked cautiously about, and lowered his voice. "It was from the institute. About Rawley."

His voice made her look up. He sounded worried.

"Lambert never sent him," he said. "The institute didn't know he was here."

"Didn't know?" she repeated blankly. "Why, they wrote."

"Some secretary wrote, you remember. On institute paper. Saying that Lambert was sending his assistant. The same day, as I recall it, came a telegram saying Rawley was on the way."

"Well, who did send him?"

"I fancy he came on his own," said John dryly. "Your letter about the Romney seems to have startled the institute. The president tried to say that Rawley was not sent by Lambert and that the institute disclaimed any responsibility for him or for his work."

He added softly, "It sounded as if Rawley was known to them, but—"

Well, we'll know more when their letter comes. The telegram said he was writing."

"That's very queer," said Helen

slowly. "Did you talk to Rawley?" "Oh, no; not till I talked with you. I thought, too, it would be better to call up the institute first and talk directly to the president or to Lambert."

"I wish you would. I don't want to wait for a letter."

"I thought I'd go down to Somerset to phone. The connection is better, and then, too, I wouldn't be overheard."

"You could talk from my room. But the connection is better in town."

She poured out another cup of coffee. John Cauldron was looking at her curiously.

"You don't seem very concerned about this," he said.

No, she didn't feel concerned. When someone had been trying to kill you in the night, she thought, you couldn't worry about much else.

She tried to speak normally. "Well, it will all be explained. He must be some artist at the institute. He does know the institute and he knows painting—that's all he's ever talked about."

"I think he knows painting," said John, "but the question is: How honest is he? Why did he come? We've no idea what pictures are in the gallery now—he's got half of them down and stacked. If there was something valuable there and he wasn't honest, it's quite thinkable that he might smuggle it out and cache it somewhere on those long walks of his."

"Yes, he could."

And what did it matter? A picture less on those walls that would never now be Lucy's?

"Yes, your telephone," she said. "And then you talk to Rawley. You can get more out of him than I. He doesn't like me."

Should she telephone Calvin? No, she'd wait till he had time to see Tex Miller. That wouldn't take long. She'd make herself wait.

Twice that morning Calvin Morse tried to get Regan—A. J. Regan, 17 Main Street—on the telephone, and both times his call was unanswered. At the second call the telephone girl volunteered that Regan might be in court.

Calvin decided to try once more, a little later, then go to Somerset and hunt him up.

He picked up his box of files and took it to the big bay window in the dining-room.

His aunt had left for her Thursday Morning Club lecture and luncheon and Niel was at the hospital. He had been there the night before till early morning. An emergency operation, he had said.

"Niel's a slave to his patients," Abbie told Calvin. "Some doctors are through when they walk out of the operating; then it's up to the nurses. But not Niel. Niel doesn't leave anyone who might need him. His sick people are his life."

Absently Calvin looked through his files, meditating on the coming talk. He had asked about Regan that morning, and Niel had said he came from somewhere upstate, starting practice alone. Finding it a little hard sledding, for he'd had only small cases.

Regan and Miller used to play pool together and he'd taken the case at once, though there wasn't anything in it for him but the notoriety.

"Miller hasn't a thin dime," said Niel. "And he won't need money," he said grimly, "where he's going."

Calvin remembered that it was Niel Nordstrom who had found Lucy. He could understand the hardness in Niel's voice.

The talk with Miller wasn't important. It was absurd, but he had promised Helen. The essential thing was to get at the sheriff and have those woods searched. It was all too possible that a man was hiding there.

Calvin didn't believe that he had got into the Polly that first night, as Helen was imagining now. It seemed to him more probable that she had experienced a nightmare. It was exactly the sort of nightmare to be expected after her child's shocking death.

But the sounds in the woods, the conviction of being followed—that was something to be looked into without delay. Some tramp, not

COMPLETE FIRESIDE NOVEL

necessarily the murderer, might be there.

The bell rang. Clarissa, he could see, was in the garden, in converse with a neighbor's maid. He put down his files and went to the door.

Rita Rand was there, hatless, her bright hair wind-blown. She had been bicycling—her wheel was against the steps—and her blue denim pants stopped halfway down her bare legs.

She came to quickly, saying with a hint of breathlessness, "Your aunt . . . is she here?"

"No, she's at her—"

"And the doctor's out?" At his assent, she looked relieved.

"It's you I wanted to see," she said surprisingly. "Let's go in here."

He followed her into the front room, then she stepped back to close the door.

"You never know," she said in a guarded tone. She turned directly to him and her intent look reminded him of the way she had looked at him the day before. She said, "This is a—a professional visit. So you will keep secret, won't you, what I tell you?"

"Professional?" For a moment he thought that she took him for a doctor, like Niel.

"Because you're a lawyer. And I need to talk to a lawyer."

"Wait a minute—wait a minute," he said lightly, to head her off before she said too much. "I'm no use to you. I'm not a member of the Tennessee bar. I practise only in New York."

"I don't want you to practise. Only to tell me something. Perhaps you think it's funny, my coming to you like this, but I feel as if I knew you. Burk talked a lot about you yesterday. He was all worked up. But even though he was furious at you, the things he said made me feel I could trust you. I can trust you, can't I?" she said, her face anxious and questioning.

THIS was astonishing. Yesterday she had been a beautiful dummy, letting Burk pull the strings, but to-day she was alive, a very real, troubled girl. And a very beguiling one. The sloppy-joe outfit was somehow enhancing.

"Certainly you can trust me," Calvin said recklessly. "What is it?"

They sat down on a couch facing each other.

Rita Rand demanded, "Can a man get a divorce for something that happened before they were married? It didn't really happen," she added quickly, "but if he thinks it did? If it looks as if it could have happened?"

"The corners of Calvin's mouth twitched."

"You mean the sort of thing he could get a divorce for—even in New York—if it had happened after they were married?" he asked.

She nodded, her eyes intent on him.

"But it didn't happen?"

"No, No, it didn't."

"Then he couldn't prove it happened?"

"No-no. No, he couldn't prove it. But if he thought it?"

"He would have to have proof. Even if it had happened, if you follow me, I can say that offhand. To give you a really professional opinion as to whether a man can get a divorce or annulment for premarital—for anything that happened before they were married—I would have to look up the law in the State of domicile."

"But if the man is without proof—merely harbors untrue suspicions—I think the suspected bride would be quite without fear of legal action."

"I wasn't sure." But she didn't look particularly relieved.

After a moment, she said somberly, "He'd walk out on me, just the same. He'd make everyone think it had happened."

Calvin considered the situation with cutward gravity.

"Wouldn't it be a good idea to get the explaining done beforehand?" he suggested. "Then there'd be no fear of reprisals."

Rita shook her bright head violently.

"Then he'd walk out before the wedding. He wouldn't believe me. No," she said, as if arguing with herself, "I'm not going to tell until I have to. Maybe I'll never have to." "Here's hoping," he said cheerfully.

She smiled absently. The subject had come to an end, but she seemed preoccupied. She looked past him and said with palpable elaborate casualness, "Tell me—you're a good friend of Helen Cromer's—did she happen to say anything about getting a letter from Tex Miller?"

Calvin's inner laughter fled.

"Yes. She mentioned it."

"I thought she would, somehow. Did she say anything about any other letters?"

"You mean, anonymous letters?"

"Yes. About Tex."

"She said she'd received two of them."

"I happen to know," said Rita Rand with that same elaborate casualness, "that a girl wrote to her to look for clues. Among Lucy's things. Because the killer must be someone Lucy knew. And I wondered if she'd looked? I'm asking so I can tell the girl."

"Yes, she looked. She told me that she had looked thoroughly, but that she had found nothing."

"That's just my luck!" said Rita bitterly. She said, sounding on the verge of tears, "I never have any luck!"

The fiction of the other girl was tossed overboard. She blurted, "Oh, I don't know what to do!"

After a long moment, he said, "Oh, yes you do. You know you ought to tell anything you know."

She looked at him in sudden panic.

He said bluntly, "If Tex Miller was with you, and not in the woods when Lucy was killed, you know you ought to come straight out with it. Or Tex Miller will hang or go to the chair or whatever they do to convicted criminals in Tennessee."

"Do you think I don't know that?" she said fiercely. "Of course I'll tell before I let them convict him! If it comes to the trial, I'll tell everything. But I've kept hoping there never would have to be a trial, that they'd find a clue to someone else."

"There has got to be some clue. Because someone did it. Someone got into those woods and killed Lucy Cromer. He didn't just vanish in thin air. I've been waiting and waiting for them to find something."

"Why would they be looking?" said Calvin gravely, "when the evidence pointed to Tex Miller? You should have told them at once."

She said defensively, "Tex told me not to tell. He wrote me a letter that first morning from the goal. His lawyer brought it. Tex said not to say a word, not to get myself into it. He said they'd find the real one, that they couldn't pin it on him."

"His lawyer brought it to you?"

"That very morning."

"Then his lawyer knows?"

"No, he doesn't. He knows Tex has an alibi, that he was with some girl, but he doesn't know I'm the girl. Tex told him I would get the letter to the right girl."

"Did he believe that?"

"I don't know what he believes. He asked a lot of questions, but I wouldn't answer them."

"He'll subpoena you. Wouldn't it be better for you to tell him before you have to?"

"No, it wouldn't," said Miss Rand decisively. "Because if they find the man, I won't have to tell anything at all."

Calvin thought that over.

"Look," he said reasonably, "it isn't such a terrific thing, is it, to have had a date with Tex Miller?"

"Burk will think it was Burk and I were practically engaged when I met Tex. You haven't seen Tex, have you?"

"No."

"It isn't just his looks," said Rita Rand slowly. "It's something about him. He's all man, if you know what I mean."

"I think I do," said Calvin gravely.

"I was crazy about him," she said frankly. "And he was crazy about me. The minute we met, almost. I was so crazy about him, after our

MURDER IN THE FAMILY

first date, that I'd have run off with him in a minute. Only he couldn't marry me. He was married."

Calvin thought: That routine. He asked, "Hadden't you known?"

"No. Nobody here knew. It was one of those war marriages and they'd drifted apart, but Hadden't got a divorce. Tex felt terrible to have to tell me. He said he'd look her up and try to get a divorce, but I could see he wasn't any too sure. He was afraid she still liked him."

"He sounds—" Calvin stopped. "Oh, I know what Tex is, all right!" she flung out resentfully. "A big handsome drifter. Sweet bait," she said in a voice that was stabbing at herself. "Just sweet bait."

That's what Helen had said, quoting the sheriff.

"I wasn't so crazy I couldn't see that," said Rita Rand. "And I had sense enough to hang on to Burk. Burk Cauldron is somebody in this town and I want to be somebody."

Her voice was bitter now.

"I'm tired of being that redheaded Rand girl who isn't in the country-club set. I thought if I married Burk everything would be all right. I'd get over Tex. You do get over things, don't you?"

"Yeah," he said, "you get over things."

"But Burk was jealous. He found out I'd been seeing Tex and he was off me for a while. Then I told him that Tex didn't mean a thing to me, that I'd never see him again. He calmed down and we got engaged and he took me to his sister's at the Folly. We had tea there. That was the day it happened."

Calvin thought back to his aunt's account of that afternoon.

"You drove off with Burk?" he asked.

"Yes, but I had a date with Tex. As soon as I got home, I had to see Tex again," she said earnestly, "to make him understand. Tex couldn't believe I would give him up like that. He thought I'd wait. I had to make him understand. And I had a right to say good-bye to him," she said defiantly.

"Where did you meet him?"

"At my house. We live near the fox farm. Between it and the filling station. Tex worked at the filling station and I told him to come by after I'd driven past with Burk. That's why Tex walked off from the station."

Again her voice was bitter. "It was just bad luck that John Cauldron drove past the same time we did, going to get Lucy at the club. Tex headed towards the Cauldron place, so Hobbs wouldn't know where he was going, so of course it looked as if he aimed to be in the Cauldron woods when Lucy got there."

"But how was he supposed to know that she would get out inside the gate?"

"They think she had a date with him. You see, Lucy drove to the club with the Herron boys and their sister, and they stopped for gas and Tex talked to Lucy the way he did to everyone—maybe they'd talked before. Lucy was a very pretty girl. Anyway, the whole town's got it worked out that they fixed up a date then."

"How did Tex get to your place?"

"When he was out of Hobbs' sight he turned up the highway and cut back through the woods. We are back a piece from the road. I'd got rid of Burk; I'd told him dad was bringing home some friends and I had to get busy. Our girl doesn't come on Thursdays. But dad wasn't coming home."

"So nobody saw Tex there?"

"Nobody but me. But I can swear that he was there till long after the dog howled. We didn't start arguing at first; we fixed ourselves some supper. He was there till long after dark, long after we heard the dog. It was dark when he went off."

She added inconsequentially, "I don't know what time it was exactly. I was crying so."

She sounded as if telling the truth. Certainly, he thought, about Tex being with her. But she could be lying about the time he left.

"We had an awful time," she said. "Tex couldn't believe I was serious about being engaged to Burk; he didn't see how I could give him up when we felt as we did. He wanted me to run right off with him. He said everyone here would think we were to be married and that we would be married as soon as he could fix things up. But I wasn't going to get into that scrape."

"I should hope not."

"Tex isn't a wolf," she said defensively. "But he was crazy about me and that didn't make him too sensible." She said it with sober detachment.

"But I got him to realise I wasn't going to see him again. Not ever. He felt terrible about that. He wasn't angry—he's sweet-natured. He just felt terrible. That's why he went off to the woods."

"Why to the Cauldrons?"

"I don't know. I guess he didn't think where he was going—anywhere to be alone and get drunk and forget it all. He had the bottle on him. He went through the woods back of the filling station and crossed the highway and got over the fence into Cauldron land—the fence is high there but Tex had commando training. That's another thing against him now."

It would be, Calvin thought.

"I didn't know where he'd gone; I didn't know anything that was happening. I didn't know about Lucy until dad came home late and told me. They'd found Tex then. I couldn't sleep all night. I thought, of course he'd say where he'd been the moment he came to, and I kept waiting for the police to come to question me. When Burk didn't telephone that morning, I thought it was because Tex had told and Burk was through with me. Then, when the lawyer drove up—"

"Keep your voice down."

"When I read the letter," she said more softly, "I could have cried. Here I'd just thrown him over and yet he wasn't dragging me in. That's pretty wonderful. And he hasn't given me away, not all these two months. Even though we haven't been seeing each other," she said realistically.

AFTER a pause Calvin said, "I'm surprised his lawyer stays on the case when his client doesn't confide in him."

"Oh, he knows Tex will tell him before the trial."

"I'm going to see Tex Miller," said Calvin. "I'll have to arrange that through Regan, and I'm telling you now, so when you hear I've seen him you won't think I'm giving you away."

"I wouldn't think that." She looked at Calvin intently. "You've got that—that something which makes people trust you."

"Lots of rascals have," said Calvin, laughing. "It's their stock in trade. But here's some advice I wish you would trust. Go straight to Burk and tell him the story. Then go to the sheriff."

As her face grew mutinous, he urged, "I honestly don't see what there is in that date to make Burk walk out on you. It isn't as though it lasted all night."

"You don't know Burk. He's got a mean mind. The things he said going home about his sister! He knows they aren't true, but he'd like to tear her apart, he's so mad at her. And he's all worked up about you too."

"Why about me?"

"Oh, he's afraid Helen will marry again. It didn't matter before if she did, because there was Lucy, anyway, but now—oh, I wish he'd forget about that old place! We'd have a better time living in town."

Calvin didn't care what kind of time Burk had. He said soberly, "You two have done a very serious thing. The sheriff ought to know at once."

"But you won't tell him?" Her eyes flashed up at him in alarm. "I told you in confidence . . . you said I could trust you."

"I won't tell him until I have given you warning," he said

guardedly. "But I urge you to tell him and get it over."

"I'll do something," she said vaguely. She got up and hitched up her blue jeans and tucked in her checked shirt. "Will you tell me about it, after you've seen Tex?"

"That won't solve your problem. The wedding is next Wednesday. Isn't it?"

She nodded, without joy in the reminder.

"I keep hoping that something will turn up," she said despondently. "That man might have killed himself afterwards or been hurt by the dog when he was getting away and being dead somewhere. I've looked and looked for him in the fields along the roads. He must be somewhere."

"He's somewhere, all right," said Calvin grimly.

"I don't get it," said Regan. "Mrs. Cromer is naturally for the prosecution."

A. J. Regan had been discovered at lunch in the Coffee Shoppe of the Omar House. The adjacent booths were empty, a radio going full blast, so Calvin had launched into his explanation without fear of being overheard.

Regan was a solid-looking young man with a square jaw and a blunt manner.

"She's not for the prosecution of the wrong man," Calvin told him. "Those letters have her worried. She wants me to see your client, to form some impression. I tried to tell her just how useless that was, but I couldn't refuse her."

Regan said soberly, "We're all sorry for her."

"Those anonymous letters have her worried."

"Has she any idea who sent them?"

"No idea at all. Except she feels it must be someone who is married." Regan gave him a brief look, then took a final bite of pie, wiped his mouth with a paper napkin and looked up again.

"Well, in a few more days she won't be wrong," he stated.

That was telling him, Calvin thought. Regan was eyeing him a trifle sardonically. He asked, "Does that give you any ideas?"

"It points a finger," said Calvin. "Yeah. That would give some reason for Mrs. Cromer's worry, wouldn't it?"

"Believe me, she has no idea. No suspicion. If she had," said Calvin slowly, "knowing her—and I've known her all my life—I can tell you she'd urge the girl, no matter what the cost, to come out with the truth."

Regan gave him another look—a long look this time.

"Well, strange as it may seem, counsellor," he said, "I'm believing you."

"If you knew so much," said Calvin, after a moment, "do you mind telling me why you didn't get the girl's testimony in the beginning and keep your client out of jeopardy?"

"Fair enough," said Regan. "I'll answer that one. I was a fool." He went on, "I'll tell you . . . This off the record, counsellor?"

"Definitely."

"My client wrote that girl a letter. Sent me with it the first morning. Said she'd know where to take it. I didn't believe him, naturally. Not after I'd got a load of that red hair. But I let it ride. Are you familiar with criminal procedure in Tennessee?"

Calvin shook his head. "I'm not a criminal lawyer, Texes."

"Well, it's like this: First the case comes before a magistrate—the justice of the peace—at which time the prosecutor and witnesses for the State appear. The defendant is entitled to have subpoenas issued for his witnesses."

Calvin nodded, and Regan continued, "I wanted to call this girl, but my client was dead set against it. Told me she wasn't the girl, said he wouldn't give the real girl away, said he'd refuse to say he had an alibi if I called her."

"He wasn't going to give his alibi, he said, till it came to a trial, and he was sure it wouldn't come to that, for they'd find the killer before that. He was so sure of himself, I thought so too."

He gave Calvin another look. "I guess I played it wrong," he went on slowly. "The J.P. found there had been a crime committed, which there had, and that the evidence was against the defendant, which it was, and Tex was held for investigation by the grand jury of the criminal court of the county. The legal term of the judgment is that the magistrate—that's the J.P.—binds the party charged over to court."

"I see."

"When you're up before the grand jury the witnesses for the prosecution can be called, but not the witnesses for the defence. So I had to sit back and let the jury concur in the findings of the J.P. that there was 'probably cause' that my client committed the crime. They returned a true bill and he's got to stand trial before the criminal court. That's when I can subpoena her."

THOUGHTFULLY, he added, "And maybe I did all right not calling her before. Mrs. Burk Cauldron will carry more weight than Miss Rita Rand. Surprise witness." He smiled.

"Anyway, that's the way I've got to play it. I'm letting it ride a few days more. But before the trial I'm going to have a little talk with Mrs. Burk Cauldron. She's going to be my star witness and it's nice to know what your witness is going to say before she's on the stand."

"It would be nice," said Calvin slowly, "to get your hands on another suspect."

Regan said ironically, "True, counsellor! You got any ideas?"

"As to identity, no," said Calvin slowly. "I suppose they've checked on anyone that was near."

"Check and double check. The two Cauldron hands were at White's miles away. Carl, the farmer, and George, the stable boy, were working over a sick mare, in and out the kitchen fixing up a mash. Nearest neighbor is old Hobbs at the filling station, and he's lame."

"No help there."

"No. Then the next neighbors are the Mayhews—away in Canada house closed. Next the Rands, and George Rand was playing cards in town. Next the fox farm, run by an old couple with four kids under eleven. Nothing then till the country club, and nobody had wandered away from that."

"How about somebody going through—somebody in a car?"

"They stopped all cars, both sides of Somerset. Alerted the towns for miles around, and all the farmers. Everybody turned out. And Hobbs swears no car went past him after the dog howled. Not till the sheriff drove up. The only thing is," said Regan, "that he could have come and gone on foot. But where is he now? The sheriff hasn't turned up a thing. But you want to talk to Tex. Let's go."

Calvin talked to Tex Miller through bars in a long, corridor-like room. Regan walked away after he made the explanation, and the guard stepped politely out of earshot.

Tex Miller was a big, blond, boyish-looking fellow with a gladiator's beautiful body and a slow, beguiling smile. Calvin told him that Mrs. Cromer wanted him to know she thought his letter was very honest-sounding, and Miller smiled—that's when Calvin saw how nice his smile was.

"It sure was a hard letter to write," Tex said. "But I wanted her to know I didn't do it." He seemed to think his simple statement was entirely credible.

Then Calvin said, making his voice very low, "And I've some other word for you. Miss Rand came to see me this morning."

Miller's eyes opened. "She did?"

"She wanted advice, and I'm an attorney, though not in criminal law."

"You know," said Miller conversationally, "that word is beginning to get me."

"I can imagine. Well, she talked to me . . . in confidence I advised her to speak out. To give your counsel the facts. And I advise you to."

Tex Miller did not answer for some moments. He drew deeply on

his cigarette, then took it out and studied it thoughtfully.

He said, sounding embarrassed, "Yes, I guess we have to. I hate to get her into it, but it's beginning to get worrying. I certainly thought they'd be on the right track before this. But they can't do anything to me, can they, when I wasn't there?"

"They've got to know you weren't there."

"I guess they've got to," Tex admitted. "I was hoping—"

"You can't expect Regan to get you off when you keep him in the dark."

"He isn't in the dark," said Tex with his slow smile. "He just pretends he is because I'm playing it that way. But I guess I've got to play it differently now."

He said again insistently, "But they can't do anything to me when I wasn't there." But his insistence did not hide the worry in his blue eyes.

"He makes a good impression," Calvin admitted to Regan, coming out. "But you need another suspect."

"You think so?"

"The jury may think they're lying about the time. And no matter how decent he seems now, who knows what he'd do when he's drunk?"

"I've seen him drunk. He goes soft and sleepy."

"You haven't seen him drunk when he's steamed up over a girl he can't have and runs into something sweet."

Regan looked worriedly at him.

"I wish you'd believe in that dumb cluck," he said. "I do. I didn't take this just to have a case. He and I hit the beaches—though not together—and we got sort of pally when he came to town. But I could cut his throat for the way he held out on me. Pam's fun, and love's love, but this guy is facing a murder charge."

There was only one thing to do, Calvin thought now. Helen must get the police to search those woods. He planned all the way up to the Folly. Men in cars at strategic intervals on the highway outside the land—that would take a lot of cars. And men inside, beating the cover.

He could help with that; he knew many a hide-out in those woods. For one place, there was the old cave, the Hideaway.

He parked before the Folly and got out just as the main door opened and a young man came out, the young man he had seen at tea yesterday.

It was Rawley, the art expert. He looked, Calvin thought, internally young to be an expert on anything.

He was hatless, the sun fell on his face, and again something about that face, something indescribable in the arrangement of the planes, some subtlety of modelling, made Calvin feel, more strongly than ever, that there was something he ought to be remembering—some association.

Again the words "bare feet" came to him. That didn't make sense. He did the swift change in Rawley's make sense. He had been looking very gay and pleased when he came out, but at sight of Calvin his face blanked out, except for a wary, almost hostile intentness in his eyes.

Calvin said cheerfully, "I hear you've found a Romney."

"Yes."

"That's fine."

Rawley made no response. He waited just long enough to make sure that Calvin wasn't going to say more, then swung off across the turf. Calvin looked after him admiring involuntarily the swift, easy way he moved. Like a wild animal.

A wild animal. Little wilder, now he remembered. Of course! Bare feet.

He remembered bare, scratched legs with a blue skin above them, and an odd, provocative face, half sullen, half inviting, with wary eyes, bright as a squirrel's, that had looked mistrustfully at him when he had hidden in with Burk.

That was the summer they were fifteen. Burk was nearly sixteen, big for his age. They had ridden back in the mountains on some pretext of Burk's, and the girl was sitting on a log by a stream.

He'd been surprised to find Burk knew a hillbilly girl. He could tell from the way they talked that it wasn't for the first time.

she sounded intimate with Burk, whenever he came near, as he walked the horses up and down, she was quiet and embarrassed, twisting her bare toes in the grass and waiting for him to walk on. Once he had looked back and she was laughing, and he could see that she was pretty. On the way back, Burk had been in high spirits.

"Little wildcat," he had said. Her name was Robin Rawley. Her people were dead and she lived with a cousin.

"We aren't saying anything about this," Burk cautioned, and Calvin had been both uneasy and secretly admiring.

Next year he heard the name again. It was said that Burk had got the girl in trouble and she had gone away.

Twenty-two years ago, that ride back into the hills. This young Rawley could be no more than twenty-one, his unsmiling stiffness an attempt to seem older.

Of course, Calvin told himself, he could be mistaken. The likeness was startling, but that might be coincidence.

He thought about the way Rawley and Burk had met yesterday. Like strangers. Burk had spoken about seeing him in the gallery one time, and Rita Rand had reminded him that they had met at tea.

What had Abbie said about that tea? "He wore an eyeshade . . . and not a word out of him."

But he had come out yesterday without an eyeshade; he had come out with an air of bravado, now Calvin came to think about it. Burk had been too consumed with his anger towards his sister to pay him any attention.

The name "Rawley" ought to have meant something to Burk, but Calvin had the feeling that Burk's emotional memories were considerably overfaded. Rawley was not an unusual name about here. It was very curious. But the young man had been sent by Lambert.

He turned—he had been standing still, looking off after Rawley—and saw the bell.

Ida let him in, with a smile of greeting for him. "Nice to see you again, Mr. Calvin."

She was Henry's wife, Ida. He smiled back. "Nice to be here."

"Come right in, Miss Helen's here now please."

Helen was coming down the stairs.

She greeted him eagerly. "You'd better come upstairs—this place is a madhouse of cleaning. That Wednesday!" At the top of the stairs she yawned. "We can't go into the gallery—there's Rawley."

"He just went out."

"He may come in. And John's in the library." The library, like the gallery, was on the second floor. "We'd better go into my bedroom. My papers are there."

Her clear voice was throwing out the implication that their business was with papers. He followed into the big room and took a chair facing her as she sat down on the end of the chaise longue.

"Oh, I'm so glad you came," she said tensely. "I called the Nordstroms finally, but you were out."

"It took a little time." He did not mention the time out for Rita Rand, but told her, concisely, of the meeting with Regan and then with Tex Miller.

He said then, "As I told you, my impression, even the most favorable impression, has no value. We have to get the facts. Get those woods searched."

She agreed breathlessly. "Yes, we must. He's there, Calvin. And last night he tried again."

"Tried?"

"To kill me."

He looked at her, aghast. "You went into the woods?"

"Oh, no, no. Not like that. Here, in the room. In the night. He tried to smother me again."

She told him in detail what had happened—about her tray—the pill, the milk, the coffee that vanished. About her drugged sleep and the feeling of smothering. . . . At the end, she saw that he was staring at her incredulously.

She stared back at him. "You don't believe me?"

"Of course I believe that you dreamed this—that you felt as you say. But don't you see, my dear, it

was just a dream? You'd got the pillow over your face—"

She looked at him in open dismay. The excitement went out of her face.

Then she said abruptly, in a flat voice, "You think I'm imagining things, don't you?"

"Just what were you imagining?" he asked carefully. "That someone had got in?"

"Yes. Yes, of course."

"There were no signs of breaking in, were there?"

"Why, no; but anyone could climb up; in some places it's possible."

"Helen, think a minute. Could he have got in early enough to get at your tray there in the kitchen?"

"He could have got at it in my room; it was there quite a while when I was having a bath. My door was unlocked."

"Granted that's possible. Granted he could get at your tray and drug the liquids. Granted he could get out of the house when the phone rang, without being seen. But how would he know that you were going to have a tray last night? Don't you see that you are imagining—"

HER voice abrupt and flat, she went on, "Lucy was killed. I didn't kill her, someone else did. And that someone is still here. Some madman—"

"Helen, whoever killed Lucy was a madman, as you say. A crazed creature. Not planning. Now such a madman could hardly come in here twice—first drug your drinks, and then come back and empty out the drugged stuff and start in to choke you—could he? That would take cool planning, premeditation."

"You make it sound fantastic," she said, after a moment. He could feel the doubt behind her resentment.

"It is fantastic," he said, "You had a nightmare. Both times. A pillow over your face. It's no wonder you had—no wonder you dreamed what you did. You were wrought up."

"You sound like John."

"I'm looking at it realistically. I don't say that you were mistaken about the man in the woods—though there may be an explanation for that. But," he concluded, determined on blunt frankness, "I am less inclined to believe in him now than I was yesterday."

She looked at him intently a moment, then her eyes lowered to the hands which were gripped on her knee. Very consciously she relaxed them, and laughed a little incoherently.

"I don't want to believe that someone was trying to kill me," she said, "and I most certainly don't want to get neurotic."

"You're not neurotic," he said stoutly. "But you've had so much horror which you are trying to keep from thinking about that, it is not surprising you have these dreams . . . and fears. Your subconscious won't let you off."

She was silent for quite a time. Then she said, "And the man in the woods? Was that my subconscious, too?"

"It could have been. It could have been an accidental trespasser. Or it could have been the real criminal."

She said acutely, "But you don't think it's the real criminal now? You think I imagined it?"

He thought about it. He said honestly, "I'm inclined to think it's nerves. But I'd have those woods searched, just to make sure."

There was a knock on the door. At Helen's "Come in," Ida appeared and said, "Mrs. Van Hoyt's downstairs."

"Van Hoyt—oh, Betty!" Helen put on quick animation. "That's Betty Meade, Calvin. You remember."

He remembered Betty Meade, but she was hard to recognise in the woman who sat chatting with John Cauldron.

The blond hair that had glistened so brightly across the tennis courts had become dark blond, and the girlish prettiness wore a sophisticated air. Her skin was a smooth honey color.

"I heard you were in town," she told Calvin. She looked at him interestedly. "I hear you're a great success in New York."

"You've been listening to Aunt Abbie."

"Mother has. I got here only last night. And I came right up"—she transferred her attention to Helen—"because I want to hear about Burk's getting married. Here I was, counting on his beaming me around this summer."

"You should have come last summer," said Helen.

"Maybe Calvin will do." She gave him a direct look again. "Now tell me about Burk's girl. I used to be madly in love with Burk."

"She's very, very pretty . . . and very young." Helen was animated and bright, a different Helen from the tense girl who had said, "He tried again . . . to kill me."

They had tea in the corner of the big room.

"This is natural," said Betty. "Your father always had tea. It's one of the first things I remember about coming here. I was fearfully impressed."

She did most of the talking. Calvin learned that she had not been back for three years.

"Mother and father like coming to see me in Chicago," she declared. Then she threw out to Calvin, "Ren lived in Chicago, you know."

Calvin had no notion who Ren had been—he seemed in the past tense—but he gathered he had been someone prosperous, for Betty's pearls were lustrous and the pin on her pale grey frock was not costume jewellery.

"I'm going to make up to you," she told Calvin. "I get to New York once in a while. I'd adore to have a handsome gent take me to the night clubs."

Calvin laughed. "The waiters don't know me. Better settle for some place off the tourist beat."

Helen was called to the telephone. Betty looked after her and said, "She's wonderful, isn't she? Not giving a sign. . . . But I know how it is."

"Do you?" said John Cauldron. The sudden words had a grating rasp. "Have you, too, lost a child?"

The hard, detached voice was as unfriendly as a thrust of cold steel. Startled, Calvin thought: Why, his nerves are on edge. The plain, gingerbread face was so quiet and un-revealing that harshness from it was a minor shock.

Betty Van Hoyt stared at him, her lips parted. Then she sat up a little straighter.

"I never had a child," she said, "so, of course, I don't really know. I can only imagine."

Calvin began to like her. He said, "That's all any of us can do."

John got up. "If you'll excuse me—"

"Well," Betty said expressively when he had gone out, "he certainly has changed from the young man who used to try to kiss me behind Burk's back!"

"He did, did he?"

"Oh, once or twice. I didn't encourage it. I expect he has never liked me since. Though that's a long time to bear a grudge."

Calvin tried to think what young John Cauldron had been like, but gave it up.

"Hello, you two!" That was Abbie Nordstrom's voice coming across the wide room. Calvin felt mildly annoyed at the interruption. He had been amused by this new Betty.

His aunt was going on, "So glad to see you, Betty. Your mother said you'd come."

They said a few things back and forth, then Abbie turned to Calvin. "I wish I'd known you were coming. Then you could have brought the cocoa."

"Cocoa?"

"Niel said that Helen had a quart bottle of coffee on her tray last night. I think she is drinking far too much coffee. So I brought her some cocoa."

Calvin stood still, his hand on the back of the chair from which he had risen. As quart of coffee.

Helen had not said the bottle held a quart. That was a lot of coffee to drink without remembering it. Four very large cups. More of the average size. The answer, of course, was that the bottle had not been filled.

Abruptly he turned, said hastily and vaguely, "That reminds me—"

and went to the back of the house. The kitchen was vast enough, as Burk Cauldron had said, for a battalion of cooks. There was a huge

fireplace into which a chimney pipe ran, connecting with an old black range, and another pipe served an incongruously modern white stove. At a table by the window a colored woman was peeling apples.

"I was looking for Ida," he told her.

"I'm Dolcey." She had a voice like her face, smooth and pleasant. "Ida's upstairs. You want I should get her, Mr. Morse?"

"I want the one who took care of Mrs. Cromer's tray last night."

"I fixed Miss Helen's tray. And I washed it up this morning when Ida brought it down."

"Then you can tell me," Calvin sat down on the edge of the table.

He said, making it very casual and friendly. "We've been arguing about the amount of coffee Mrs. Cromer is drinking . . . or should drink. My aunt thinks it's too much, so she brought out some cocoa."

"She gave it to me," said Dolcey. She smiled. "I like your aunt's first rate, but she got notions about eating and drinking."

Calvin smiled back. "Yes, she has. The thing is, Mrs. Cromer says she didn't drink any coffee last night. Do you remember if the bottle was full when it went up?"

"Indeed it was. I let it run over before I put the cork in, so it keeps scalding hot."

"How much of it did she drink?"

"She drank it all."

"You're quite sure?"

"I'm sure," said Dolcey firmly.

"Ida, she noticed it, too, when she brought down the tray. Miss Helen hadn't eaten a bite, but she drank up both the milk and coffee."

Calvin sat thinking about it. He had wanted facts and he had been given a fact, but his mind, unsatisfied, turned it over and over.

"Were there two cups on the tray?" he asked finally.

"They was two cups," said Dolcey patiently.

"Then there must have been traces of coffee in one?"

The woman glanced at him, a veiled scrutiny in her eyes. The knife went slower to the apple she was peeling.

"It's funny you ask that," she said reflectively. "One of the cups was clean. Never used at all."

"But the other—did it have coffee in it?"

"No sign of coffee at all. Just milk stains. . . . I guess she drunk the coffee up first, then drunk the milk."

"No, it wasn't like that. She says she drank a cup of milk last night, then poured out a second cup and let it stand. This morning, she says, it was gone. So she must have taken it in the night and not remembered. And she must have taken the coffee, too, and not remembered."

"She got a right not to remember, with all this trouble on her," said Dolcey pityingly. "And all this wedding coming."

DOLCEY said, considering, "But she didn't use the cup for coffee . . . Funny . . . It isn't like Miss Helen to drink out of a bottle."

Calvin sat silent, intent. Then, abruptly, he got up. He said, with forced casualness, "Well . . . that accounts for her not sleeping well."

The mild voice told him, "No trouble accounting for her not sleeping. Her one ewe lamb set on and destroyed."

He said, "Thank you," in a pre-occupied voice and went out into the back garden. He struck off along a hedge-lined path, his hands deep in his pockets.

Like Dolcey, he didn't see Helen putting a vacuum bottle of coffee to her mouth. The stuff would be too hot to drink. And he didn't see Helen pulling out the stopper and waiting for an entire quart to cool, when she could have poured out a cup at once.

Helen had been positive that she had poured out a cup of milk and left it on her tray.

Now, suppose she drank that milk without remembering it. Suppose that at some time in the night, before midnight, when the telephone definitely roused her, she had roused enough to want coffee and to pour

it into the used empty cup. There would be coffee stains left in the cup.

But Dolcey had said there were no coffee stains.

Helen had said the milk pitcher held only two cupsful. If there was a drop or two left, and she had poured them into the cup later, that would not be enough to obliterate coffee stains. So it could not have happened like that.

Now, suppose she didn't drink the cup of milk. Suppose it was there on her tray when she wanted coffee. Wouldn't she pour the coffee into the empty cup? It was the natural thing to do.

But the second cup had not been used. So you must either believe Helen had drunk out of the vacuum bottle—waiting an indeterminate time for the bottle of scalding coffee to cool—or that she had poured the milk in the cup back into the pitcher and used that cup for her coffee. For cup after cup of coffee.

Then, after downing the quart, she had poured out the milk again and drunk that, thus removing the stains of coffee.

That was nonsense. Helen, in a hurry for coffee, would have used the empty cup.

He went over and over it, arranging and rearranging the possibilities in his mind. He went over Helen's story.

She had believed—until he had talked her down—that the bottle had been heavy when she first lifted it. She had been right. She had believed—until he talked her down—that she had not touched the second cup of milk or taken the coffee or the pill.

But now—All right, he said to himself, his hands making fists in his pockets, as they did in stress of argument, now look at the other side of it.

Suppose he accepted absolutely the story Helen had told in such detail. What had happened last night?

The liquids had been drugged—heavily drugged, because one glass of milk had sent her off. And someone had come into her room in the dead of night, carefully emptied the teatime stuff and taken away the pill. Then he had put a pillow over Helen's face and tried to smother her. He would have smothered her except for the accident of the telephone.

According to Helen, it was the second time this had been tried. The first time the dog had saved her. Now the dog was dead. Died of grieving, they said, but he could have been put out of the way.

According to Helen, there had been incidents in the woods. The rock flung at her horse. The stealthy sounds following her. One such incident might be accident. But a succession—followed by last night's attempt—

Now what did this mean? Who would want to kill Helen? The same person who had killed Lucy?

There was no way to know, Calvin thought, balancing possibilities. Lucy's death might have been a sex crime. Or it might not have been; it might have been linked to these attempts on Helen's life.

Who would benefit by Helen's death? That was the cold, brutal question? Who would benefit?

Helen had money, the money her father had left her outright. What was she doing with it, now that her child was dead?

She had given Niel ten thousand for the hospital. Abbie had said. She must have made a will after Lucy died—Will Betty would see to that. Probably made some division between Burk and John. That was conjecture, but it seemed to Calvin, very reasonable conjecture.

In that event Burk would benefit, but not John. For money, Calvin felt, would mean nothing to John against the loss of his home here with Helen.

But the money was a small part of Helen's possessions. Cauldron's Polly. That was her great treasure. hers to enjoy, but not to dispose of. The vast stone pile, the temple to implacable pride which the first Peter Cauldron had reared and the succeeding generations had served.

MURDER IN THE FAMILY

Calvin swung about and stared up at it. The upper stories were flushed with late sunlight, and the square tower seemed made of rosy stone, but the lower walls were black in shadow, dark as the patches of ivy on them.

Standing there, he swore softly at those hard walls. Cauldron's Folly. If Helen had died last night, who would have title to it?

He must get hold of the will, he thought, but in the meantime his mind worked on the terms he'd heard so often quoted. To Helen for life, then to her surviving children. If she had no surviving child to take, then to the children of Burk.

Burk, at the moment, had no child to take, but the courts, Calvin knew from experience, normally allowed subsequently born children to take. There had been a case similar to this, he recalled, recently cited in his office.

Yesterday Burk had been bitter because his children, not he, had been named in the will, but, Calvin reflected, as soon as Burk had a child, he would be guardian for the twenty-one years before that child became of age.

Twenty-one years is a long time. And if the child died, Burk, as its natural heir, would inherit.

Burk. He came back to Burk each time. Burk had been in the Folly last night. He was in a rage against Helen. Calvin could hear his light, hard voice, edged with threat, "But I think I shall some day. Helen, I think some day I'll bring home to you what it means to be hurt. Really hurt."

As if her child's death were not enough!

Burk had been in the Folly the night after Lucy was killed. He had been there before she was killed. He and Rita had driven off about the time John left to go for the girl. He had driven Rita home and left. He might have hidden his car in the woods and come back on foot to the Folly.

But that would mean premeditation. That would mean he knew Lucy would get out at the gate, and he couldn't know that.

No, it was more reasonable, if you were to work on the supposition that Burk was guilty—it was more reasonable to believe that he had driven back on impulse.

Hobbs would not have seen him—Hobbs had said he had come out when the dog was howling. Burk's car might have been just behind John's car with Lucy. And Burk could have seen Lucy get out at the gate. He could have got out and run to her, just as the tail lights of John's car were going off to the right.

Perhaps he meant only to talk to her, to enlist her influence. But a rush of rage might have overwhelmed him, a realisation of what it would mean to him to have this girl out of the way. And then, once he had done the dreadful thing, he was committed to go on. For Lucy's death was useless without Helen's.

But it might not have been like that. Burk might not have killed Lucy. Burk might have a perfectly good alibi for the time after he had left Rita. But Lucy's death might have started him thinking about Helen's. He might have made an immediate attempt. And then waited until the dog was out of the way. Until there was opportunity.

Then he had acted again, alarmed at Calvin's return. Rita had said that he was "furious" because Calvin had come back, fearful that Helen might remarry.

Calvin had been tramping blindly up one path and down another, instinctively keeping away from buildings: now he found he was back in the rose garden, beside the boulder that marked the grave of the first Cauldron wife.

He had a sudden feeling that someone might be watching curiously his erratic marching, and, for something natural-seeming to do, he stooped and read the name rudely lettered in the stone. Rosamund. From Fairfax, Virginia. A once-light-hearted belle in crinoline.

Calvin straightened, still staring at the boulder, his thoughts racing. Burk was a possibility. Who else?

Who else had opportunity and motive?

What about Rawley? Perhaps illegitimate children had legal rights in Tennessee—they could inherit in California, if the father had acknowledged the paternity.

Of course, he had no proof at all that Rawley was Burk's child; only the memory of a face, but that memory was one of the things indelibly engraved on a boy's mind. It had been overlaid, forgotten, but once the attention found it, there it was, vivid and unique. There was the likeness, and the name.

It was a strange tangle. Burk's son—if it was Burk's son—there in that house. He looked up at the Folly again.

The shadows had crept higher; only the top windows caught the light, reflecting it in blurred and desultory gleams. And there in that house was Helen, in the renewed confidence in her surroundings that he, like a blind fool, had restored to her.

Calvin went quickly in through the terrace door. His aunt was in the front hall rising from the telephone. Helen had gone, she told him, to have dinner with Betty. She had been staying to do some telephoning.

"We couldn't imagine what had become of you," she said. "Dolcey said you went out the back way. I know Betty would have asked you if you'd been here."

He said, "I'll leave Helen a note." Abbie was lingering. "It's too bad we each have a car."

"Do you mind if I don't show up for dinner to-night? I've got my key, if I should be late."

"That sounds like old times." She smiled at him affectionately. "There's paper in the writing room."

Calvin found the desk and wrote hurriedly: "Helen dear, you were right and I was wrong. That was no dream. Be on your guard."

He stared distastefully at what he had written. It sounded theatrical. That was why murder was so easy, he thought. You felt such a fool when you had melodramatic suspicions. So murder could sneak up on you.

He could picture Helen staring at it, incredulously at first, then with rising panic, and impulsively he added, "My dear, dear girl."

Then he wrote, "Tell me one what you told me till I see you again. I'll see you as soon as possible."

HE addressed the envelope and sealed it carefully and gave it to Ida, whom he discovered in the dining-room. "You'll see Mrs. Cromer gets this as soon as she comes in? It's important."

"I'll see to it," Ida put it in her pocket, then her hand came out with a small object that she held out to Calvin. "Oh! I kept forgetting to give this to Mrs. Nordstrom. It must be the doctor's. Would you give it to her?"

It was a clinical thermometer. Ida explained, "I found it in Miss Helen's room this morning. It must be the doctor's, for hers is in the bathroom."

He pocketed it. "I'll give it to him. You'll see she has the letter at once?"

"Don't you worry about it, Mr. Calvin. I'll see to it."

She smiled at him as she used to smile in the old days when he had hung about, waiting for Helen Cauldron, and he smiled back, though there was no mirth in him.

Just as he came back into the front hall, Rawley was going up the stairs. Calvin glanced after him, hesitated, then the urge in him made him follow.

When he opened the door into the gallery, Rawley was across the room, stooping over a picture on the floor. He spun about quickly.

"I want to ask you a question," said Calvin. His voice was frank and friendly. "Are you, by any chance, a relative of Robin Rawley's? I met her as a boy."

For a long moment Rawley stood looking at him, palpably taken by surprise, uncertain.

Finally he said, as if feeling his way, "Do you think there's a likeness?"

"A very strong one."

Rawley was silent for a moment more. Then he said softly, almost jeeringly, "You're smart . . . I had the feeling you were looking at me."

"Why not? Your mother was a very unusual-looking girl."

Then Rawley said truculently, "What business is it of yours?"

"No business at all," Calvin's voice was easy, though his nerves were taut. "I was just interested."

"I'm not hiding it," said Rawley, his excitement mounting. "I'll tell them when the time comes . . . Or have you been talking about me?"

"Not at all. I merely wondered. Anyone who ever saw your mother couldn't fail to wonder."

"He didn't," said the young man shortly. Then, with a sly triumph, "But I didn't give him much chance."

"But you must expect people to guess . . . since you use the name."

"I'm not ashamed of the name!" The young man's voice was so savage that Calvin felt he had touched off dynamite. "I could use another, if I'd a mind to, and maybe I will, some day you don't expect. But my mother's name was a good name."

"Of course. I only meant—"

The other came a step closer.

"You think my mother was easy got, don't you? You think Burk Cauldron only had to whistle and she came running. Well, I'll tell you one thing. She was married by a hill preacher and she had a paper to prove it. She gave it to me before she died. Words by a preacher and a paper are good enough for any court."

"Then why don't you—"

"Never you mind why I do or don't! That's purely my business." He stopped; he seemed to realise that his outburst had said more than he had intended. The anger in his voice gave place to sullenness.

"I wouldn't have told you that much, only you guessed," he said, and added, "And you were looking down on my mother."

"Indeed I was not."

"My mother was a fine woman. She went to some place where no one knew her and she was always Mrs. Rawley there. She had taken money not to make them trouble—that's the way the Cauldrons did things," he said bitterly. "The high and mighty Cauldrons. But she brought me up to know I was as good as they were. That's why she never married again. She wanted that paper to be good."

It couldn't be good, Calvin thought, or old Peter Cauldron would have taken steps about it. A hill-preacher marriage. The man might not have been ordained.

"My mother was wonderful. She was a singer, a natural singer. She earned money by it, in clubs and eating places. She sang hillbilly songs, mostly, all sad and sweet."

It was strange to think of the little girl on the log growing up into a singer who sang her plaintive songs in smoke-filled city rooms. What was that Bible verse about singing your songs in strange lands?

Calvin said sincerely, "I think she must have been very fine."

"She tried to teach me to sing. But I never wanted to do anything but paint. But you can't make money at painting. That's why I took the job at the institute. It was an office job . . . in Lambert's office. That way I could study, part time."

"It is rather extraordinary," said Calvin. "The coincidence. Your being sent here."

Rawley gave him a sharp look. He said suspiciously, "They haven't told you?"

"I told me what?"

"I wasn't sent." Rawley gave a short laugh. "My job was in Lambert's office, and I opened that letter and sent the answer. It was like it was meant," he said with sudden intensity.

Again, as though he had let slip more than he intended, he checked himself, then went on defensively. "But Lambert couldn't have come, anyway. He's got more work than he can take care of. So that part was all right. That letter was my chance. I'd always meant to come some day, to take a look at the high and mighty Cauldrons, and this was like it was meant."

It was as curious a coincidence as

any he had ever known. Calvin thought. That letter from Cauldron's Folly. Coming into the hands of Burk Cauldron's son.

He said slowly, turning it over. "But why do you ask if they've told me? They think Lambert sent you."

"They don't think it now. They've got in touch. But it's all right," Rawley said, with a trace of sly triumph again. "I told John Cauldron I came because it was my chance to show what I could do. Lambert thinks he knows it all, but I've learned more than he thinks."

He looked at the walls, at the paintings on them, at the paintings stacked along the floor.

"I can do this as well as Lambert," he said arrogantly. "I haven't cheated them. It isn't costing them anything but my keep, and when I'm through they needn't pay me a thing unless they're satisfied. John Cauldron thought that was all right. He thought me a smart, ambitious young man."

RAWLEY

laughed. Calvin didn't like his laugh; it was too cocky, too full of pride in himself. But he liked the stiff dignity with which Rawley said, "Now I've got things straightened out, I'd be obliged to you not to say anything. Not till I'm ready."

"You mean to tell them yourself?"

"I'll tell them . . . when I've finished my job."

Calvin said slowly, turning over those last words. "I agree that it's purely your business, as you say. I shan't mention it. Though I think it would make no difference to Helen Cromer. You could count on her sympathy."

He had used the word deliberately. Rawley's eyes literally blazed.

"I'm no charity kin," he said harshly. "Some day I'll have what I'm entitled to. With no thanks to them."

There was such hate in his voice that Calvin was startled into answering harshness. "Helen never did you any wrong . . . nor Lucy."

"They're Cauldrons."

The pure hate in that voice echoed in Calvin as he went out of the house. And there had been hate in Burk's voice. So now there were two, he thought, and either of them could be guilty of a part or of all of this black mystery.

There was no shred of evidence, as yet, to point to one or the other. And evidence, he thought, would be hard to get.

The most useful thing he could think of to do, at this moment, was to check on Burk's movements after he had left Rita, the night that Lucy was killed. Rita might know where he had gone or where he had said he had gone.

Abbie Nordstrom had said that the Rands were a good family gone to seed, and the house that Calvin Morse drove to was a run-down affair, but George Rand proved to be a spruce individual, his reddish moustache turned up jauntily.

He professed to remember Calvin as a boy. Rita was not at home, he said, but in Somerset with a girlfriend.

"She had a little free time; some of Burk's cronies are giving him a party at the country club to-night. Better to-night than the night before the wedding." He winked at Calvin.

Calvin laughed dutifully, noting that Burk would not be at the Folly that night. He drove down to Somerset the short way, direct from the club, and found Regan in the Omar House, in the Coffee Shoppe again, but this time he was not alone in his booth.

Rita Rand sat opposite to him, her bright head tilted towards him across the table, and they had an air of being deep in talk when they looked up at him. The radio was on, as usual.

"So you're the girl-friend," said Calvin, sliding into the seat beside Regan. He said to Rita, "Your father said you were out with a girlfriend."

"I had to tell him something. He telephoned me," said Rita, with a nod towards Regan.

"Message from our friend," said Regan in an undertone.

"I see."

"And I've persuaded her," said Regan, "to have a little confidence in me."

"That's fine."

Rita Rand leaned forward again. There was a low, rosy light on the table and she looked very beautiful.

She said, her voice a half whisper, "And he says I don't have to tell until the trial."

Calvin looked towards Regan. "I thought your client had decided to tell the facts."

"He has . . . to me. But why show our hand to the prosecution?" Regan muttered defensively. "Surprise witness."

Calvin said dryly, "You think Burk will bring her back from South America?"

"South . . . But we're not going."

Rita looked from one to the other.

Calvin kept his voice low. "Burk Cauldron will not care to have his wife involved in notoriety. My notion is he will take steps." Then he said bluntly, "You made one mistake. Why make another?"

Rita said angrily, "What are you trying to do?"

He said grimly, "The prosecution has got to have a fire bull under it. You've held back information that might have been invaluable."

"You didn't sound like that this morning!"

"A lot has happened since this morning."

He could feel Regan looking at him at that, but he did not look at Regan. He was looking directly at Rita.

"And you didn't sound like that this morning," he said. "You said you wouldn't marry him without telling him. You said he'd walk out on you."

"I've changed my mind. Maybe he won't . . . afterwards." She said definitely and her eyes said, "Anyway, I'll be Mrs. Burk Cauldron."

She appealed to Regan, "You said we could wait."

"I was under the influence," said Regan slowly. "I'm allergic to red-heads." Then he said shortly, "Sorry, beautiful, but the big courtroom scene is out. I think the counsel from New York is right."

"Oh, you — you — you're both against me!" Then she said, "Suppose I won't? Not yet?"

"You'd be in a very bad fix," said Regan soberly, "because my client is going to talk. I know, I told you I could keep him quiet, but it's wrong to play it that way. It's too much risk. If there's a chance of having the prosecution do more looking he's got to have that chance."

He added, "And you're not the girl to keep him from having that chance."

"No, no, of course—" She thought about it anxiously. "But not before the wedding? It's only a few days—"

Calvin said doggedly, "Even a day is important. I told you I wouldn't talk unless I warned you first. I'm afraid I've got to warn you now. I want Mrs. Cromer to know this. And the authorities."

"But not before I've had a chance to tell Burk?" She was imploring now. "I've got to tell him myself, not have him hear it."

"When can you tell him?"

"Not to-night. He's at a party. To-morrow—as soon as I can."

"Make it soon," said Calvin. "And," he said carefully, "it may not be such a surprise as you think. How do you know he didn't hang around your place that night? To see what you were up to. You said he was jealous."

"I saw him drive off," said Rita impatiently. "I told you something I'd have heard about it right away."

"But where did he go? After he left you?"

"How do I know?"

"You might know where he was when he heard of Lucy's death."

"Where— Why, he was right here. In the Omar House. He was getting his key and the clerk told him."

"It took him a long time to get here."

"Oh, he said something about a flat. He had to change a tyre. No, he didn't hang around. He'd have walked in on us. He doesn't know a thing."

A flat—unless he'd been seen on the road—was no alibi. Calvin's suspicions swung back and forth. Burk Rawley. He felt as if riding simultaneously two different and distracting horses.

He said, rising, "Tell Burk and get a word with."

Her look at him was full of misery and resentment.

"Burk said it was bad luck, your coming back!" she flashed at him. He had given Regan a brief glance of significance and Regan got up and walked a few steps with him.

Calvin said quickly, "There's something I want you to do to-night. With not a word to anyone. Get the clerk of the court to open up and let you see the will of Peter Cauldron, Mrs. Cromer's father."

"Peter Cauldron?"

"It was probated about fourteen years ago. Thirteen and a half."

"You said to-night—"

"Time is of the essence. Get hold of it. If there's a copy, swipe it. If not, copy it—that's a commission. I'm retaining you for that service. Make it seem it's for yourself."

"Can try. If I can find Charley Scholtz. But it will cost you a bottle."

"It's worth it," Calvin handed over a bill. "Where can I reach you?"

"I have to take her home first. Give me two or three hours. Wait for me at my boardinghouse, Mrs. Pragg's house. Two doors from the Methodist Church on Lee Street."

Calvin went to the drugstore for a sandwich and a cup of coffee. The hospital was at the end of the street, and as he judged it too early to drop in at the Meades', he turned in to the hospital on the chance that his uncle was there.

In a few moments Niel came down to him. He was in a white coat, his hands red from recent scrubbing.

"Let's go outside," he said to Calvin.

They stood out in the quiet of the dead-end street, and Niel began talking nervously. "Another emergency. Too late, as usual. Died on the table."

"That's tough."

"Come in too late. If we'd had him here before we could have got it in time. But there aren't beds enough. I've tried to get them to build a new hospital, but nobody does. New gadgets for the club, yes. New office buildings. New post office. But a new hospital, no. Those with money go to Nashville or Rochester. So we make do."

This bitter, angry Niel was a man Calvin had not known before.

"That young man," said Niel, "he was a G.I. Had a terrible time in the Pacific. Malaria. Bugs. Boils. Landings got through all that and came home and got this strep infection that could have been stopped if we'd had him in bed here. And he's not the first. If I'd had my way—"

He lit a cigarette.

"That's the only thing I've ever wanted money for!" he burst out. "To put it to good use. A lot of people in this town could have built that hospital. A new wing, anyway. Helen Cromer could have done it. She gave me ten thousand after Lucy died, but what's ten thousand?"

He angry, bitter voice went on, "She'd rather wait and keep her money going. Salvages her conscience with a few lines in her will. She may change that will. And the sick can't wait—"

He broke off and looked up at the dark shadows of the mountains against the sky.

"Not soon enough," he said. "If I were insured for a hundred thousand dollars I'd make an end to myself and think nothing of it. A public benefaction."

"That would be fine for Aunt Alice."

"What's one person?" said his uncle. "What's two for that matter?" Then his lips began to smile, though his eyes did not.

"Able doesn't have to worry," he said in his normal tones. "I'm not insured for that much."

"I'll tell her to watch it. Look, here's your thermometer. Ida said you left it last night."

"Teh—Where did Ida find it?"

"In Helen's room. Said it had dropped on the floor."

"Oh! How careless—Well, I've got to get back in there."

No matter how leisurely the Meades' dinner, it must be over now, Calvin thought. So he found he was late. Helen had left directly after dinner. Betty was driving her

"It's too bad," said Mrs. Meade in the sympathetic manner he remembered now. "But do come in."

He told her he'd have to hurry to the Polly with the message he had for Helen, and she smiled.

"You'll find Doctor Hilton there," she said. He's our new clergyman. He said he wanted to talk over something about the wedding, but that's just an excuse; he's terribly taken with Helen. It was because he was calling that Helen had to hurry back."

That changed Calvin's plans. He could have gone to the Polly and back before the appointment with Regan, but if Helen had a caller on her hands, it wouldn't be easy to see her alone. Later on, when the man was leaving. So he sat in his car in front of Mrs. Pragg's house till Regan appeared.

"Here it is," said Regan, handing over a long envelope. "I suppose I'm not to ask questions?"

"I may be asking you a few tomorrow. Don't forget to bill me for this."

"That's charged off against your advice," said Regan, grinning. "But, you know," he added, "the idea of that big courtroom scene was pretty tempting. . . . I wish I knew what you've got up your sleeve. You've got something."

"When I know what it is myself," said Calvin, "I'll come to you."

Regan lingered a minute more at the car door.

"That girl," he said a little awkwardly, "she means all right. . . . though why she's set on marrying Burk—but that's her funeral."

THE country club was lighted up and a piano was sounding and voices in chorus. The party was going strong. The filling station was lighted, too, and the fat man sat there in his rocking-chair on the little platform before his house.

Calvin had to stop to open the Cauldron gates, then he drove through and, from old habit, got out to close them. Before he got out he glanced up the black lane where Lucy had been found, and he reached into the glove compartment for the 38 he habitually carried and slipped it into his pocket. Then he drove on to the high, level ground.

The Folly was dark; not a light showing. Again he was too late, he thought, chagrined.

His letter was not warning enough. Helen would think the danger was from outside. She would not be on guard with Rawley. Rawley might have obtained keys to her room.

He tried to think what he could do. Someone in the kitchen might be up, but a sudden distaste for driving through the dark tunnel of archway made him stop in front, intending to walk around the house to the rear.

A voice spoke from the shadowed steps, "That you, Morse?"

John Cauldron's lean figure detached itself from the darkness and came forward into moonlight space. "Just finished a smoke. Helen has gone to bed."

"I heard the clergyman was here," Calvin said, in explanation of the hour, "so I waited." He said lamely, "I didn't realise it was so late."

"She went up early. Left the clergy to me," said John, amusement in his voice.

"Then she'd be asleep now?"

"Yes; she is. . . . Anything I can do?"

"No, just—just plans for to-morrow."

If Helen had a to-morrow, he thought bleakly. Then he knew what had to be done. He said, "Might I trouble you for a glass of milk? Something if I ate."

"Come in. I'll get it."

As he entered the kitchen, Calvin asked, "May I use your phone?" and turned back. He went quickly to a long window and unlatched it. Then he went to the phone and called the Nordstrom house.

His aunt answered and he told her, "Just to say I'll be late. I won't wake you. Good-night."

In the kitchen John was pouring out two glasses of milk. There was a chud overhead, and John said, "That's Rawley. In the gallery. I told him we wanted the pictures back on the walls for the wedding, and he's drank it at."

Calvin drank his milk in silence. When John had let him out, he drove off down the hill till he was

out of sight, then stopped his car and came back on foot.

There was a light now in the right-hand wing, and he sat down and waited till it went out, till he judged John had time to be asleep, then he went to the house, took off his shoes and slung them about his neck, opened the long window with careful quietness and went in.

"Mr. Cauldron is in his room," the clerk said, "but he can't be disturbed. He left word to that effect."

Rita Rand said, "Oh!" disappointedly into the telephone.

"That you, Rita? I didn't know your voice." The clerk had a different tone now. Fred Joram had taken Rita Rand out before Burk Cauldron came back to Somerset.

"Yes. Hello, Fred. When did Burk say—"

"That was quite a party." The clerk chuckled. "He left word not to ring him till he called down. Said he might not go to the office till afternoon. But if it's you—"

"Oh, no," she said quickly, and hung up.

She wanted Burk in a good humor. She had been crazy to call him now, she thought, but when she had a thing to do she felt a driving urge to get through with it.

Calvin Morse had wrecked everything. She felt a burning resentment against Calvin and against herself for having gone to him. She had been a fool to tell him. She hadn't meant to, she had meant only to find out if Helen was doing anything about those clues, but Calvin Morse had seemed so nice—and he had said that she could trust him.

And now he had gone back on her and made Regan go back on her.

But perhaps it was better this way, she thought, rallying her spirits. If the story had to come out later, Burk would certainly believe the worst. Now she could make him see—she hoped she could make him see—that it was nothing. She would say she had let Tex come to keep him from making a scene somewhere else.

Tex seemed almost unreal to her now. Sometimes it seemed almost unbearable that she would never be with him again, but she had known that when he wasn't making love to her Tex was not enough for her.

Now she was deathly tired of uncertainty and frustration. She'd be glad when the wedding was over and there was no looking back.

She thought about the day ahead of her. It would have been a good day if Calvin Morse had not spoiled it. Sybil Blackburn was giving a luncheon for her at the country club.

Helen Cromer had brought that about. Sybil Blackburn had always snooted her, but now she'd be in the country-club set. She tried to feel satisfied and happy, but she was too possessed by her uneasiness.

To-night was the best time. They'd go somewhere to dinner, somewhere far out, so it would be a long drive back, and she'd tell him when they were parked some place, his arms about her.

Now she would try to put it out of her head and concentrate on the luncheon. Miss Rita Rand, the guest of honor.

The telephone operator always listened to calls to and from the Polly, for there was the chance of something exciting. That murder had been a terrible excitement. And now there was the wedding.

A man's voice was saying, "Helen? This is Calvin. Did you get my letter?"

"Your letter? Oh, the note. Yes."

"You did?" There was a short pause. "You certainly didn't act on it."

He sounded angry.

"Why, I haven't said a word."

"That wasn't all to it."

"But it was!"

"The part before that—"

"There wasn't any before that."

There was another short pause. Then the man said, "Nothing about the dream?"

"Why, no. That was all—"

"I'll come up to see you. Now."

He hung up.

That was a funny talk, thought Susan Pragg, flipping out the key—about the dream. Something sentimental. Her mother had said that Calvin Morse used to be in love with Helen Cromer.

Susan Pragg had a great admira-

COMPLETE FIRESIDE NOVEL

tion for young Mrs. Cromer. She had class. Susan's mother didn't like her to say "class," but whatever you called it, Helen Cromer had it—so slim and straight, with that lovely refined face and that beautiful black hair, with just a trace of wave in it. Susan knew for a fact that Helen Cromer never had a permanent.

Her brother had class too. You either had it or you didn't have it; you couldn't put it on.

Now, Rita Rand had glamor, but not class. And what right did Rita Rand have in the Coffee Shoppe last night with Andy Regan, when she was going to marry Burk Cauldron? Susan didn't approve of that at all.

Calvin Morse said, "But the first part of the letter?"

He had got Helen away from the Polly, out with him in his car, and they were parked on the highway beyond the Turn while he went into this business of the letter.

It had been merely a half sheet, she told him, saying not to tell anyone until he had seen her again, that he would see her soon, and the envelope had been on top of the mail in the silver tray in the hall and Ida had told her Mr. Calvin had left a letter for her.

So someone had tampered with it. Someone had torn it in two, leaving only the unimportant words.

Burk could not have done it. Rawley could; or John. John might have looked at it, because John was undoubtedly disturbed at his return and warily curious to know what was between them. John might have torn it in two to take out the words "My dear, dear girl," which were in the middle of it.

That didn't make much sense, but it was a possibility. Rawley was a greater possibility.

Calvin came out of his considering silence to tell her, "Someone tore off the first part. I told you it was no dream. I told you to be on your guard."

"You told me it was no dream?" She looked bewildered. "But you said it was a dream! You said—"

Yes, he had said, and now he had to unseat it. He had to undo the reassurance he had so mistakenly built up. He told her slowly, in careful detail. The vacuum bottle had been filled. There was no trace of coffee in the cups. One cup was unused.

He said, "It isn't thinkable that you drank that scalding stuff out of a bottle. Or sat waiting for a quart of it to cool when there was a cup there."

"Certainly I didn't drink out of a bottle," said Helen a little indignantly. "Someone poured it out." She looked off to the Cauldron land on the right of the highway where they were parked. "He's hiding in there."

SHE didn't understand and he had to make her understand. He had to make her appreciate that the man who wanted her out of the world—the man who had, presumably, taken her child's life—was not lurking in hiding. He was no sex killer, ranging the woods. It was someone with free access to the house, someone with motive and opportunity.

He told her so, and she listened intently. He said, "I asked myself, 'What motive?' The answer isn't pleasant, Helen."

She waited, her eyes on him.

"Your father's will," he said. "There is no logical reason for an attempt on you unless it is motivated by that will. I've been reading that will. There are two people in your house who believe that they would benefit if you died childless."

She looked at him blankly. "What two people?"

He said bluntly, "There's Burk."

"Burk?" She repeated it incredulously. She stared at him in open disbelief that he was serious. She said, "My brother!" as if that settled it.

He told her, "The courts are full of men who have killed sisters, wives, mothers, even their own children. Being a brother doesn't mean a thing. Remember what he said to you—how he threatened—"

"He was just angry."

"Just angry! That was a bitter anger, Helen. It had been brewing for a long time. Can't you see that he might care more about the Folly than about you, that you might seem the obstacle—"

"But he wouldn't have the Folly! If I died, it would go to his child, and Burk has no child."

"He will have. The law gives him time to fulfil that contingency. And it's all the better for him if the child is an infant. In that case he would be guardian for all the years until the child reaches maturity. Twenty-one years is a long time. And if it died, the lawyer in Calvin felt obliged to point, 'he would inherit from it.'"

"And I suppose you think he's capable of killing it!" she said hotly. "Calvin, you're horrible!"

"All right, I'm horrible. But please appreciate that I don't say that Burk has done any of this. I say only that there is a possibility that he has. That he had motive and opportunity."

She was silent, staring at him as if appalled. He was amazed at the feeling in her. Once more, he thought wryly, he was up against that family feeling of hers.

Then she looked down, thinking deeply. She said in a flat, hard voice, "I don't believe it for a minute. But is it in your mind that he could have killed Lucy too?"

"He could have come back. Rita had sent him away. He could have reached the gate just as Lucy went in. He would have seen Lucy getting out, starting off alone, and it could have rushed over him what it would mean if she were out of the way. It might have happened like that."

She stared at him stonily. "I can never forgive you for even thinking that."

"You asked me. I give you the truth as I see it. I don't say it was that way. I say it might have been that way. Or it might have been that Lucy was killed by some prowler—perhaps Tex Miller—and it was then that Burk began to plan. He has been talking to Rita about the Folly—worrying for fear that you will marry again now."

"Why now?" she asked coolly.

He said as coolly, "Because I am back. Because we used to be in love."

"He can put that out of his head."

"I didn't put it there. I didn't ask to come back."

"I know." She was suddenly penitent. "I'm being hateful. I know you're only saying what you think you must say." Then indignation swept her again.

"But you sit there, detached, and cold as a stone, telling me that my brother—"

"I am not cold as a stone!" he gave back irately. "And I am not detached. I am horribly worried over all this. What do you think made me sit out in the hall opposite your room last night?"

She didn't answer, and he went on hotly. "I sneaked into the Folly like a burglar and sat in that passage off your hall till morning, hoping to catch him in an attempt and find out the truth. I was furious you hadn't locked your door. I tried it when I came to make sure. That's why I thought you hadn't got my letter."

He had done more than try her door. He had opened it in a panic when he found it unlocked, and had stood there till he made sure she was in bed and breathing. He felt tender and protective. Now he felt disgusted.

He said, "If you think I relish having to tell you unpleasant things . . . having to sit out there in the dark because someone might creep in on you—"

"But how did you get in?"

He told her, a little impatiently. He said, "But now you must have police protection."

She looked instantly alarmed. "You mean you'd tell this to the police?"

There has been an attempt—several attempts—made on you. You believe that, don't you?"

"Yes, I believe it. I'm sure of it, now I know the bottle was filled."

MURDER IN THE FAMILY

And the cup not used. I think we ought to tell the police that much. But if you're thinking of mentioning Burk to them—

"He has got to be mentioned. As one of the possibilities."

"He is not a possibility," she said stubbornly.

"All right. Then look at the other possibility. Burk's son. His natural son, Rawley."

He was nettled enough to enjoy her dumfounded look. He said, "Did you ever hear of the Rawley girl—long ago?"

"Something vaguely. I never really knew. You mean this is her boy?" Calvin told her the story. He told of the ride back in the hills with Burk, when they were boys, and of Burk and the little hillbilly girl.

He told how he had taken Rawley by surprise with his direct question and Rawley had told his story.

Calvin said, "He says he came only to look you over. That's understandable. It could be merely a queer coincidence. But it's thinkable that having come and seen the place, and believing that his paper gave him rights—"

"Of course. It's Rawley!" Her voice was almost glad in the escape from the things he had made her consider about Burk.

"But there's no proof."

"Isn't the letter proof?" she said quickly. "Burk couldn't have torn that letter in two. Rawley didn't want me to get the warning."

"John could have torn it in two. To take out the emotional words I wrote in the middle. I got emotional writing that grisly warning. I don't know what he'd make of that part about the dream and being on guard."

"I'll fix that," she said. "Yes, John might... though it's hard to believe of him. He's so detached."

"He's not detached about you. But this is all sheer conjecture, Helen. We have to remember that there isn't a scrap of evidence against anyone."

After a moment, she said hesitantly. "Don't you suppose that Sutton—he's the sheriff—might find out by questioning Rawley?"

"Third degree?"

"No, no! I meant that if he's so unstable he'd get confused."

"He's shrewd enough not to incriminate himself. I have a notion that he was ready to be recognised, ready to make a bid for a place in the family. He wasn't wearing any eyeshade at that tea with Burk. He's had his looksee. Now he's got some plan in that foxy head of his."

She sat thinking about it. Then she asked, "You think he will try again soon?"

"If it's Rawley, he'll have to. He won't be staying much longer. And he may feel that he'll be thrown out at any moment."

Deliberately he added, "And if it's Burk, he hasn't much time either. That's why you have to be guarded."

"And if I talked of going away—"

She was following some thoughts of her own. "If I talked of going off to travel, to visit, wouldn't that hurry things up?"

He said grimly, "I should think so."

"Then it's perfectly clear what to do," she said in a calm, reasonable voice. "If we go to the police, without any proof in our hands, and they start questioning Rawley, there never will be any proof. You said yourself he wouldn't incriminate himself. And he wouldn't make any more attempts. That's true, isn't it?"

He looked at her warily. "What are you leading up to?"

"That it would be stupid to go the police now. That we must not let anyone know that we suspect a thing. I'll take care of that warning from you. Then he will make some move that will give him away. And you'll get hit on the head. Not for a moment."

"Calvin, forget protectiveness! I'll be on my guard. I won't eat anything that the others don't eat. I'll only pretend to. And I won't be alone with anyone you think is suspect. I'll be careful."

"You wouldn't know what to watch out for. It's too risky."

"Please think a moment. It isn't risky if he thinks I'm drugged in my

room and I'm not... I'll be locked in Lucy's room. It's the only intelligent way to find out."

"To use yourself as bait?"

"I'm not afraid. I'm somehow not afraid now, when I know what to look out for. And I've a right to do it," she urged. "I have a right to find out the truth."

"Better never to know than—"

"And have Tex Miller convicted for something I felt he did not do? Do you think I could bear to live with the memory of that? And never to know the man who killed Lucy was someone near and dear to me? Calvin, you know this is the only possible way to find out the truth. You have to admit it."

Yes, he had to admit that cold logic was on her side, but he went on arguing. And he had to admit that she had him on every count. But it went against the grain, he said, to have her risk herself.

"I'll be careful," she declared. "I'll have my revolver, remember. Lee's old thirty-eight. Oh, I'll be careful."

"I don't trust your carefulness. I'd have to be there."

"Of course. I'll need you. This is what I thought. I'll have a sort of house party. Before Burk's wedding. I'll ask Burk and Rita and Betty... and Abbie and Niel, too, because Abbie will feel it if she doesn't see more of you. Then I'll talk of going off for a change, going right after the wedding. How's that for a plan?"

"It's crazy. But it has possibilities. Nasty ones," he said glumly. "It's risky for you, Calvin. You may be suspected of guessing—"

"It's going to be a lovely house party," he said, with a sudden laugh. Driving back slowly, they discussed plans. Suddenly Calvin said, "There's one other possible motive, Helen. Your own will. In whose favor is it?"

"I've divided the money. One half goes for a hospital in Lucy's name. The other half to Burk and John, in equal shares. You don't see any motive there, do you?" she said, faintly mocking again.

"How much is it?"

"About two hundred thousand."

Calvin said, "Why leave so much for a hospital?"

"I don't know. I guess because Niel wanted it so badly. But I've been thinking it over. If Burk had this place he couldn't possibly keep it up on the income from fifty thousand. Not with taxes. I've thought I ought to change it, and I will, right away. I'll have to tell Niel, though."

His wouldn't like it, Calvin thought absently. He could hear his uncle's voice, bitter, discouraged. "The sick can't wait." But Calvin's chief thought was of the fifty thousand to Burk. Inadequate as its income might be, that income would be no deterrent to Burk.

He said, "Don't tell Burk you are going to change it. He might decide to wait for that."

She gave him that stony look again. "I suppose you can't help thinking like that. No. I won't tell him."

Calvin's aunt and uncle were at lunch when he returned to the Nordstrom house. Abbie had been gone when he got up that morning, and he expected questions on his night out, but she was preoccupied with the telephone call Helen Cromer had just made.

To Calvin's surprise, Abbie was not receptive to the idea of the house party.

"We're too old for a young crowd," she said. "I was Helen's mother's friend, and though I've grown very close to Helen, that doesn't make me young. And I don't think Niel will care to be moved up there for a few days."

But Niel said amiably: "It doesn't matter what bed I sleep in; I get very few hours in bed anyway. The way things are now. This influenza. Clarissa can relay my calls. Or the operator can. When does Helen want us?"

"To-night, after dinner," said Calvin. "She said to come early and have some bridge."

"We ought to encourage her in this," said Niel. "She's been very far down the ladder, from what John tells me. By the way, Calvin, I ran into the sheriff to-day and he said you went to the goal to see Tex Miller. Will you tell me why?"

"Helen asked me to. She was worried because of a letter he had written her, and by anonymous letters she's received. She wanted my impression of him. It was a crazy idea, but I thought I ought to go."

"And what impression did you get?" asked Niel dryly.

Calvin owned, "About as accurate as you get of a man's health by looking at him in his clothes. He seems harmless."

"You would have a more accurate impression if you had seen him when they brought him in that night. With his shirt covered with lipstick."

After a silence, Calvin said, "You think he's guilty, don't you?"

"The evidence is against him."

"But if he should have an alibi? Those letters have given Helen the belief that he has."

"John told me about those letters. Some hysterical girl who wants to get Tex off."

He added, "John was very disturbed at the impression they made on Helen. She wanted him to see the fellow, but he refused. It's a matter for the courts. Not for amateur meddling."

Abbie said defensively, "Naturally, Calvin couldn't refuse to go, but Helen shouldn't have asked him. She's been very tense these weeks. She's had so many shocks. And she takes them so hard. I think Betty Van Hoyt will be very good for her."

She paused, then went on, "Now, Betty felt badly about losing Ren-few—they were very happy together—and I think she felt badly about not having children, but Betty always gives the impression of being a happy person. Didn't you think she'd grown very attractive, Calvin?"

Calvin laughed out. "Dear Abbie! Why switch my affections to Betty?"

"I didn't know your affections were involved, after all these years." Then Abbie gave up pretence. She said seriously, "I think it's nice to be friendly again with Helen, but it would be foolish to be anything more. Her life is here."

In Cauldron's Polly. Her crazy castle. He said lightly, "Yes, I expect it is. Don't worry, Abigail; it's only a beautiful friendship. As for Betty, she's already propositioned me for a tour of New York's sin spots. I feel we have an expensive future."

"Ren left her very well off."

"Shall I let her reach for the check? No, Abigail, don't feel you have to do anything about my love life. There are quite a few glamor girls in New York."

"Two many," said Abbie. "You get into the habit of procrastinating."

"So I do," said Calvin. "So I do." Leaving them, Calvin went to Somerset to find Regan, for he wanted the young man's knowledge of Tennessee law on a couple of points, but Regan was out of town.

He went to the hardware store and bought some barbed wire. Doors could be locked, but windows were a hazard. Helen had asked him to get some picture wire at the same time, and he told the clerk it must be strong enough for some of the heavy pictures at the Polly.

"If you're going to the Polly," said the clerk, "would you take this package along? I've got those blanks Burk Cauldron wanted. They just came in. I had to send for them."

"Blanks?"

"That's what he wanted. Thirty-eight. I could leave them at the Omar House, but I guess he wants them at the Polly. We don't have any call for blanks, so I had to order them."

Lee Cromer's revolver was a .38. Calvin Morse had an instant vision of Helen firing at some assailant, firing a blank.

Then he had another thought. His own revolver was a .38. How did he know Burk hadn't looked in his car?

"I'll take some real thirty-eight," he said.

When out of town he stopped and replaced the cartridges in his gun with the new. Burk might have had some old blanks.

Back at the Nordstroms' he stretched out and slept. After dinner, his uncle and aunt drove off.

"I'll be along," he said.

He made another effort to reach Regan, but he was still away, so Calvin went over the will again by himself.

"I, Peter Cauldron, being of sound and disposing mind—" Calvin hurried through the familiar legal words to the significant provisions. "To my son Burk the sum of one hundred dollars and no more."

That was Cauldron implacability for you! Small wonder that Burk had been bitter.

"To my daughter Helen all my other personal property, including moneys, securities, credits, and the contents of my family residence, Cauldron Hall, commonly termed Polly, to be hers absolutely."

Calvin put down the will and lighted a cigarette. And that was only a part of it. Only chip diamonds. Now for the Koh-i-noor:

READING on, he came to: "I devise to my daughter Helen during her natural life my ancestral home, Cauldron Hall, lying and situated in—" He raced through the details of location on to the important part.

"At the death of my daughter Helen I devise the said real property to the heirs of my son Burk; provided, however, that if my said daughter Helen should die leaving a child or children surviving her, the said property shall go to such child or children in fee."

Contingent interest, thought Calvin. To Helen, for her surviving child or children, if any; if none, then to the heirs of Burk. To his children or grandchildren, but never to Burk himself.

Did Rawley know the contents of this will? His mother, through her relatives, could have got hold of a copy when it was probated.

He thought about that "paper" of Rawley's and why he had not put it to the test. Lack of funds, probably, and lack of years—Rawley was only twenty-one now—and the lack, perhaps, of anything to gain but the name, as long as Helen was alive and had a child.

The business of the blank cartridges had tipped the scales a trifle towards Burk, but his mind was trying to keep Rawley and John in balance.

"I devise to my nephew John Cauldron in fee my house and lot in the town of Somerset situate on the corner of Lee Street and Park Lane, together with all my other property, real or personal of whatsoever name or nature not otherwise disposed of by this will."

The ordinary residuary clause, the catchall. There had been nothing but the house for John to get; everything else had been disposed of, but Peter Cauldron had taken no chance of having his son Burk come into anything but that contemptuous one hundred dollars. A will made in unforgiving anger.

Calvin put it carefully in a small briefcase he locked and packed in one suitcase. The package of barbed wire he put with the picture wire in a small case.

There were seven people in the big room. Abbie Nordstrom, Betty Van Hoyt, John and Burk Cauldron were playing bridge. Niel was looking through some papers, Helen was doing wool work, and a little apart from them all, Rawley sat in one of the big oak chairs, bending over the colored pages of a magazine.

To look at them, Calvin thought, you would think them any group of nice, pleasant people.

He dropped his bags in the hall and walked over to the table where Abbie was adding scores.

"Here's a gimmick the hardware man said you ordered," he said casually, handing over the small heavy package to Burk. As casually Burk said, "Thanks," and pocketed it.

"We were beginning to be afraid you weren't coming," said Helen, smiling very brightly at him.

"Homework," he said lightly. "Oh, I've got your picture wire. I'll give it to you later." He looked about the room. "Where's Miss Rand?"

Burk, not looking up from checking Abbie's score, said briefly, "Not here."

Helen explained. "Burk said she wasn't feeling too well and wouldn't be over till to-morrow."

Burk grinned at her over his shoulder. "Let's not gloss it over. We had a fight. So I went and got Betty."

"But she'll be over to-morrow," asked Helen.

Burk shrugged. "I wouldn't know." Then he bent over Betty and said something inaudible.

Betty laughed out. "You're a typical bridegroom," she said aloud.

"What?"

"They always make last-minute passes at the nearest girl."

"Burk, it's your deal," said Abbie briskly.

"You come over here, Calvin, and tell me about New York." Helen had bright eagerness in her voice. She threw out to the world at large. "Calvin's got me all excited about going to New York. I think I'll go right after the wedding."

Burk, dealing cards, hesitated a moment, then went on without looking up. Calvin glanced from him to Rawley, saw that Rawley was looking at Helen, and that he glanced down quickly when he saw he was observed.

But what did that prove? For the matter of that, Niel and Abbie were regarding her very interestedly.

"I need a change," said Helen. "A complete change." Calvin tells me I ought to be on my guard against getting into a rut here. I've been having morbid dreams and he says they aren't dreams, but forebodings of my dull life in the country."

So that was what she had thought up for explanation. Not bad.

Niel asked, "What sort of dreams?"

"Oh, drowning, mostly," Helen said indifferently. "I never remember them clearly."

"I want you to try that cocoa," said Abbie, studying her hand.

Burk raised his voice. "I said one spade."

The play went on. Helen moved nearer to Calvin and they began to talk in low tones. Their voices were inaudible enough so that he could tell her the barbed wire was in the small case in the hall, and she nodded understandingly.

He murmured, "And when I'm not around—catching up sleep in the morning—you'll stay with Abbie or someone safe?"

"Indeed, I will. Whatever you plan," she said quite clearly, her voice positively fond. He looked at her, startled, and a flash of mischief laughed at him from her grey eyes. "What plays are you going to take me to see?"

Then she said under her breath, her voice anything but dovetail, "Play up! What do they think I'm going to New York for—an idler?"

He began to laugh helplessly. She was funny. Obeyingly he edged nearer, examined her wool work. Their heads close together, they talked inaudibly, going over the plan for the night. He caught Abbie looking around from her cards at them.

"Never, in our most infatuated days, did we put on such an exhibition," he murmured.

The bridge ended. Burk came over to them. "This sounds like quite a jaunt you're planning. But don't play bridge with your aunt before you go, Calvin, or she'll clean you out. She plays a cut-throat game... How's for some drinks, Helen? Will you ring?"

"Henry's gone to bed. I'll get them."

"No, no; Betty and I will serve you. What will you have, ladies and gentlemen? It's on the house."

"Scotch and soda," said Niel.

"Tut, tut! Ladies first... Abbie!"

"Sherry for me."

Helen said, "Sherry." John shook his head. Rawley said, "Nothing for me," without looking up from his magazine. Calvin said, "Scotch and soda."

"Two Scotches, two sherries... Come on, Betty, and I'll mix you a Samson and Delilah. Guaranteed to bring down the house."

They were gone quite a time.

"Smooth your hair," Burk said to her in loud mock warning as they entered.

Betty looked across to Calvin. "Don't believe a word of it."

But she had the air of enjoying herself. He was glad somebody was enjoying the evening. Burk's spirits seemed forced. John Cauldron looked

lightly bored, Rawley as stiff as a poor actor. Helen was artificially keyed up by putting on her act.

When the drinks were over, she said suddenly, "I think I'll go up. Night, Abbie." She kissed her quickly, then put her cheek against Betty's. "It's fun to have you, Betty."

She crossed to Burk, who was sitting down, and bent and kissed him. That was to show me, Calvin thought. Her hand rested a moment on John's shoulder. "Good-night, John." She looked toward Rawley and her voice rang almost true, "Good-night, Mr. Rawley." And then, "Good-night, Niel."

She was out the door very swiftly to get the small case in the hall, Calvin understood. From the stairs her voice floated down to them, "Oh will somebody bring me some milk? Just leave it on the small table outside my door."

That was the trap they had planned. The milk waiting conveniently. She was to be slow in taking it in, to give opportunity.

She was to leave her door unlocked, to barricade herself in Lucy's room. Calvin was to watch from the passage. Operation Sleepless, he had said lightly.

There were four bedrooms along the front of the house on that side: first a room which Niel occupied, opening into the master bedroom that had been given to Abbie, with its dressing-room and bath, and then the room which had been Lucy's and then Helen's room and her dressing-room and bath.

Opposite the first three rooms the other side of the hall was an unbroken wall that was the back of the gallery. The gallery was terminated by an oddly narrow passage running from the back of the house into the front hall; one end of the gallery opened into the passage but the main door to the gallery was at the other end, from the open space about the head of the stairs.

The passage joined the hall almost opposite the door to Helen's room. One angle of the junction was formed by the gallery, the other by an enclosed service stairs, with a door into the passage.

Calvin's room was behind the stairs, its windows towards the back garden. It had no bath, so if he was discovered in the passage he could be presumed on his way to a general bathroom that was beyond the service stairs, opening into the hall—a room built before Helen's grandfather had reconverted the dressing rooms.

Calvin went up to his room, hurried into pyjamas and bathrobe and made a trip out to the bath for a quick cold shower to wake him up. A dim light burned in the hall—Helen would put that out when she took in the milk.

The hall was dark when he came back, so he lighted a cigarette for a last smoke, dropped his flashlight into one pocket, then turned to the table where he had left his revolver when he had taken out his pyjamas. The revolver was gone.

He was sure he had left it on the table, but he searched the room. No doubt about it, it was gone. Anyone could have slipped into his room while he was out.

"I'm a fine detective, he thought bitterly. The most disturbing thing about it was that he was being suspected, his room entered. He was not operating in the obscurity that he had hoped.

A knock sounded on his door; he heard his aunt's voice saying, "Calvin!"

Surprised, he opened the door and Abbie Nordstrom came in. She was in a dark blue, tightly belted robe, her hair plastered against her head in what Calvin appreciated must be a "set," and covered with a dark net. "I knew you'd be up," she said. "You're such a night owl. And I wanted a chance to see you."

She sat down and came directly to the point. "Calvin, I wish you wouldn't urge Helen to go to New York."

"But why?" he said, guardedly. "Don't you think a change—"

"She can have plenty of change in Chicago with Betty."

"He wasn't going to argue; he wanted to hurry her out. So he smiled down at her as he stood, leaning against the fireplace, and said casually, "Well, she can work that out later."

Abbie was not to be deflected.

"She's taken with the idea now because she's restless. But it wouldn't bring you any happiness, Calvin. That's what I'm concerned about. Helen is never going to live any life but her own."

He said lightly, "Let's not worry about that now."

"I do worry," said his aunt. "I didn't get you back here to have you fall in love with Helen all over again."

He kept his tone bantering. "My dear, you began taking me to the Polly the moment I arrived."

"I didn't expect you to be anything but friends."

"Well, that's all we are."

"You've been rushing to her every moment. And if she goes to New York—"

Abbie looked anxiously at him. She said bluntly, "You've got charm, Calvin. But it wouldn't do you any good." She met his quizzical glance and told him, "Because she's going to marry John Cauldron."

The quizzical glance stayed on guard on his face. "Now, how do you know that?"

"Because John Cauldron told me so. He told me to-night. Before you came. It's been understood between them for quite a time."

"That's interesting," he said in a neutral voice.

"She doesn't want anyone to know because John is still staying here."

THERE was a pause. After a moment Calvin said, "Then why did John tell you?"

"He told me in confidence," said Abbie.

"Knowing you'd tell me and warn me off?"

"No, no, I don't think he thought I'd tell you," said Abbie reflectively. "Not exactly. I expect he did think I'd warn you off. Of course, I'm telling you in confidence."

Calvin gave a dry laugh. "The same sort of confidence you keep with John?"

"No," said Abbie. "Men are different about confidences. I ask you not to give me away to Helen and I don't think you will. She'd be fully annoyed at John and me. But women don't keep confidences when it's a matter of someone they are fond of." She smiled rather pathetically.

"I'm very fond of you, Calvin," she went on. "You were like my own son to me when you were a little boy. I used to look forward to those vacations of yours more than you know. I was sorry when you stopped coming, but I understood. Now I don't want anything to happen that would hurt you again."

He said, "Don't worry, Abbie dear."

She wasn't ready to go yet. She said, "Helen would rush around New York with you, but in the end—"

She made a little gesture.

"It would be John. Because her life is here and John belongs to that life. And I expect she wants to get married now to have another child. There would be a sort of justice," said Abbie considerably, "in having it his child. It was hard on John, being left out of everything."

"Oh!" Calvin exploded. "I'm sick of this Cauldron inheriting and disinheriting!"

So she was going to marry John. And she had never told him a word about that. He remembered her hand on John's shoulder to-night, John's upturned look at her. Then why, in the name of all that was reasonable, hadn't she told John about these attacks on her?

What was it she had said? "John is utterly convinced it is Tex Miller. He thinks I'm all worked up, anyway." Well, he could see why John had been sceptical. He himself, had been sceptical. But not to tell him about John!

But why should she tell him? He had not come in any spirit except friendship. All the talk about New York, all the eager, interested voice, the dove-like eyes—he had known that was all an act. Part of their game.

But why wouldn't it have done as well to come out and say she was going to marry John? That would hurry things up as well as New York and an infatuation for Calvin Morse.

But that would risk John. Calvin Morse did not matter.

He had no idea what Abbie had

been saying. He cut in, "When are they going to be married?"

"John said some time this autumn. Now, you won't let Helen know that he has told me?"

"I won't let her know. Why should I? I don't care whom she marries. If John's her notion of a bridegroom—"

"He'd make a very good husband."

Another prince consort. An older, less beautiful but docile Lee Cromer. Then Calvin shut his mind sharply from examining the fact. This did not change the plan for to-night. He had to get Abbie out of here. Deliberately he yawned.

But Abbie was slow to move. She talked along, shifting to her worry about Niel and the way he was trying to make money through stocks when he did not know anything about stocks.

"It's for that hospital," she said. "I wish you'd give him some advice."

"I will. Now, Abbie"—he put his hands lightly on her shoulders and turned her about—"I've got to get some sleep. Last night was a big night."

She stepped out into the passage and disappeared.

When he judged Abbie had regained her room, he went out to where he could see through the darkness the darker oblong of Helen's door.

He was uneasy at the time that had elapsed before he had come on watch, though it was not likely, he thought, that an attack would come so soon, and he had a sour, disagreeable feeling at Abbie's news.

Helen left the milk out for some time, to give plenty of opportunity in case it had not already been dosed. Slowly she made ready for bed, wondering if the trap had been too obvious.

Presently, she went out into the hall and turned off the light and took in the milk, looking at its innocent air with wary curiosity. She poured it into a bottle and hid the bottle carefully.

Then she did something she had not done for a long time; she sat down at her desk and took out her diary.

It was an intermittent record. She used to jot down happenings of any importance, and sometimes interesting stories that she wanted to remember exactly, but she had made only two entries in it since the night that Lucy died.

One line gave the date of Lucy's death. Another line was the date of her burial.

Now she turned the pages to find the first blank page, intending to write in such cryptic milestones for memory as "House party beginning. Plans for New York."

She came to the page opposite the two brief entries about Lucy; the page should have been blank, but it was not blank. Scrawled raggedly across it was a line of writing.

Helen sat staring at it. It was not her writing, but it was enough like it to pass for hers. Big and black and sloped. But she had never written those words. Never in her life—unless she was losing her mind and memory—never had she written those words.

"Too hard to go on—to pretend to care for anything."

Her heart began to hammer in her as she realised what they meant there. They were the confession of despair, the last words of a woman too despondent to go on living. Whoever had written them—and it could have been done during any of the long time she had been downstairs before dinner— whoever had written them had already a plan for this night.

He had not known that she would ask for milk. He had not depended upon that. He had a plan. She was to die, and die, apparently, by her own hand. The diary would be found, open, on her desk.

How had he dared write that beforehand? Because he knew she never touched the book now? Because there would be no time later? To make its effect, the diary must be found at once.

Mechanically she reached farther into the drawer. It was no surprise that the revolver was gone.

She thrust in the book and shut the drawer quickly, as if that would shut away the horror. She felt an impulse to rush out into the hall and tell Calvin... but that was too

rash. Her enemy might be already watching... from a distance. She must do nothing suspicious.

Perhaps the milk had changed his plan. It would be simpler to have her sleep her life away than to overpower her and have a shot ring out. Perhaps he had made the milk wholly lethal. Perhaps he would not be coming at all now.

No, he would come... he would come to make sure. He would not run the risk of having her brought back to life next morning.

Jumping up, she heaped the bed clothes to simulate a body. She placed a pillow obscuringly. If he saw at once that the bed was empty, he might slip away before Calvin could be on him.

She was not quite clear what Calvin Morse had in mind to do—whatever the opportunity offered, she supposed—but it was clear that there must be time to make the recognition positive.

She caught up the small case and took it into Lucy's room and shut and bolted both doors. The old bolts were strong; the first Peter Cauldron had not depended on keys. She put on a low desk light and spread the barbed wire beneath her window.

Calvin had told her to wear gloves, but she had forgotten to bring them into the room, and though she tried to be careful her hands shook and got badly pricked.

It was hard to make herself get into Lucy's bed, but she got in. She lay waiting for something to happen. If she had taken the milk she would be very soon asleep. He would come.

She thought about it very carefully for what seemed a long time, then she held up her wrist and stared at the luminous dial. Only a few minutes had passed. She lay still again, every faculty absorbed in the faculty of listening.

Then she reasoned that he would not be coming at once, that he would give the stuff ample time to work on her. This time, he was telling himself, there was no dog in the next room to give the alarm. This time, by no fortuitous chance, would the telephone ring and wake the house. This time there would be no failure.

She asked herself why the dose had not been lethal before. Well, the last time, she thought quite tactlessly, there had been too much fluid and one could not be sure how much she would take.

The first time? There had been only one cup of milk that first time, and she could have been killed quite easily, but he had evidently preferred to have it seem an accident. The pillow over her face. Everyone knew she had taken a sleeping pill that night. Now he was tired of half measures.

BUT it was not Burk. She told herself that resolutely. She had few illusions about Burk, but she clung to the belief in his family feeling.

Then the word took on irony. Family. That boy he had fathered, had never known, never thought about, was his family. That bitter boy...

Did Rawley know about her diary? Yes, of course he did. When he had told some stories about painting, John had told her to write them down in her commonplace book, and Rawley had been naïvely offended at the word "commonplace" until she had explained. Rawley, an artist, would be good at imitating.

She looked at her watch again. The hands had scarcely moved. She wondered if it seemed as long to Calvin out there, for he must be there now.

It was strange that it should be Calvin who was standing guard. Well, he owed her that much, she thought, not bitterly now, but remembering the old bitterness. Calvin had been cruel once.

Her thoughts drifted and for a few moments she ceased to be aware of listening. And then a sound broke in on her, a soft, muffled sound, coming from within the room, and her heart stood still with shock.

She listened, her head stiffly lifted

from the pillow, her body rigid, unstriving, and she heard it distinctly. A creak, a rustling. It came from a huge wardrobe against the wall. With sudden, awful clarity she understood. He had hidden there, was moving from behind the clothes to come out.

He had slipped in, after they had all come upstairs, to avoid too many appearances in the hall, meaning to enter her room through the connecting door. He must have heard her move in, have wondered... But he had felt sure she had taken the milk... He was coming out... In a moment that wardrobe door would open.

There was an instant when she felt as if paralysed, unable to move, then she flung off the numbing terror and heard herself saying in loud, normal tones, "That you, Ida? Wait, I'll let you in."

She sprang out of bed, rushed to the door, wrenching at the old-fashioned locks and talking in a clear, high voice, "What's the matter? Someone sick? I didn't hear any phone. I came here to get away from that phone if it should ring."

To be out in the hall was to be in another darkness, but Calvin was there in the darkness, and she plunged into the passage. Calvin was not there. She fumbled for the door to the service stairs, and fled through it, closing it behind her, and ran up the stairs to the third floor.

It was important, she was thinking frantically, it would be important to-morrow to have him believe that she had really thought that Ida was at her door. So she went to the room where Henry and Ida slept, and knocked and called softly, "Ida, Ida!"

There were sounds from within the room, the creaking of springs and a sleepy, interrogative murmur. "Ida!" she called more clearly.

Then Ida's voice answered, awakened to alarm, "You calling, Miss Helen?"

"Yes, I thought you were at my door just now. I thought I didn't wake in time and you went away. Did you want me for anything?"

"Me... at your door?"

"I thought so. Were you calling me?"

She heard feet thudding on the floor and then the door opened. Ida stood there, a small shape in a voluminous nightgown outlined against the window behind her.

Ida said, "Miss Helen, I never called you. I been right here in bed. You been having a dream."

"I guess I have," Helen gave a shaky laugh. "I thought you were wanting me—maybe you were ill—and I hadn't heard you in time, so you went away."

"I'll go back with you to your bed."

"Oh, no; I'm perfectly all right. Just a dream. But I wanted to make sure you were all right." Helen's voice had gained assurance and authority. "I'm sorry I disturbed you. I hope you get to sleep again."

She turned quickly away, standing at the head of the stairs till she heard Ida's door close. She hurried along the upper hall, past empty rooms, to the room waiting for Rita Rand. She went in, flashed on the light, bolted the door. She could say she had slept here because there was no reminder here, nothing to make her dream.

Had she deceived him with her feigned talk to Ida? Not if he saw that barbed wire beneath the window. But he might not see it—the wardrobe was not near the window. And he could not have watched her through the wardrobe.

But where was Calvin? Why wasn't he there when she needed him? She felt betrayed.

Calvin shifted, in forced patience, from one foot to another. There are surprisingly few positions to be assumed when keeping in readiness to leap forward or backward. He had tried them all. He thought about the direction from which a man might come.

Please turn to page 55



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Rawley's room was in the back of the central part of the house, so he could come down the hall or he could step into the gallery and emerge into the passage. At a sound from the gallery Calvin meant to vanish within the service stairs.

Burk's room was on the other side of the house, just beyond the enclosed entrance to the tower, and he could come down the hall or go up the service stairs on his side of the house, cross over and come down these stairs.

A sound from any direction was suspect and it was disconcerting how many sounds there were. Last night the house had been sepulchrally quiet, but to-night a wind was rising, and it went up and down the chimneys and sent the oak branches against the windows at the end of the hall.

Calvin wondered if Helen was getting any sleep or if she was sitting up in Lucy's room, waiting. Then he wondered if this was all a piece of hysteria.

But his revolver had been taken. That was a giveaway, he thought. And then he thought that if Helen was shot with that revolver, who would know that she had not come into his room herself and taken it? She had Lee Cromer's revolver, but perhaps that was hidden.

He thought about Burk and about Rawley. Conjecture was useless without evidence, but it passed the time. That business in the woods, following Helen, throwing a rock at her horse, seemed more in line with Rawley than Burk. Rawley was on the place, could watch her movements.

He thought about the relation of Burk and Rawley to each other. He wondered how well Rawley's "paper" would stand up in a court of law.

Ironic, he thought, if Burk was trying to clear the way for himself, for some future child, and all the time it would be Rawley who would inherit.

He thought about Burk and Rita Rand. She had made her confession, Calvin judged, and Burk had quarrelled with her. Now what? He'd see Rita as soon as possible and try to find out what Burk had said. He might have let slip something.

Then he thought about Betty Van Hoyt. His impression of her was not quite clear, for the image of the present, self-possessed woman was blurred by old pictures of a more better-sketched girl very much in love with Burk, but there was something distinctly provocative about the thought of Betty Van Hoyt.

It would be a pity, he thought, to have her revert to her old fondness for Burk. He wasn't good enough, Calvin definitely didn't like him. He didn't like Rawley, either. For the matter of that, he didn't like John Cauldron.

Actually, though, he had more sympathy for John than for either of the others. And he could understand, he thought, as his first anger cooled, why Helen had not told him about John.

There was that business of John's living here with her so long — she would probably move John out — before she let their engagement be known. It would make talk, though Helen would hold her head high and ignore the talk. In the end, people would say it was the right thing.

No, he could see why she had not told him.

Odd that John, the more cautious of the two, had told Abbie. John wouldn't be worrying whether Calvin Morse got his fingers burned or not. What John was worrying over, Calvin decided, flattening his tired back against the wall, was the fact that Helen seemed so interested in the returned Calvin Morse.

John didn't know it was an act. John wanted Calvin to shy off.

Evidently John wasn't any too sure of his hold on Helen. He must know it came from long habit and association. Well, John needn't worry. He would have no rival for the position of prince consort.

Deliberately he wrenched his mind away from John and Helen, and thought of Abbie and Niel and Niel's passion to make money for the hospital. He'd do what he could, get him to let a good investment man

handle the money Helen had given to his care. Doctors were notoriously poor investors. Sitting ducks for sharpers.

Finally he ran out of things to think about. No use trying to concentrate on anything in New York, for New York had no relation to him now, a man in a corridor of Cauldron's Polly, gripping a flashlight. Incredible that he had been back in Somerset only a matter of sixty-one hours.

It was an hour later when he heard sounds from down the hall, to his left. It might have been a door opening or a creaking floor board. He drew back into the passage, listening intently. Someone was coming — coming very quietly.

His nerves tightened; he edged back against the wall, prepared to make a rush when the prowler turned into Helen's room. Then, from the hall a sudden ray of light shot out, swung about into the passage and beamed straight into his eyes.

HE flung himself out of it, and at that instant a hushed voice spoke, in mild surprise, "Calvin?"

Calvin said, "Niel?" excitement abruptly deflated.

"You on the same errand?" said Niel with careful quietness. He explained, "I didn't want to wake Abbie, crossing her room . . . and that plumbing there sounds like Niagara."

"On my way back," Calvin murmured. "I heard you coming and —" Niel must think his spring away from the light exaggerated, so he threw out, "Your light startled me." "So it seemed." For all its mildness, there was an odd undertone in Niel's voice, a hint of dry suspicion, and Calvin wondered if Niel could possibly imagine that the proximity of Helen's door had anything to do with his excursion.

A general practitioner in a small town was probably capable of imagining anything.

Hastily Calvin withdrew to his room, and was careful not to emerge till Niel had time to return. He felt chagrined because he had been so easily detected. He told himself it was natural for Niel to be using a flashlight — that a prowler would not be flashing a light about — but that argument did not ring true.

And then he thought that during the time Niel had been in the bathroom and he had been in his room, Helen's door had been unwatched. A man could have come and gone. The thing to have done, he saw now, was to have hidden within Helen's room. He had not thought of that and if Helen had, she had not suggested it.

Probably John wouldn't have liked it, he thought sourly. Well, she had better get John into this, and let him take his turn standing guard. As far as he was concerned, the first time careless rapture of these nights was wearing off.

For a moment, on waking, Helen did not know where she was. The window was in the wrong place, the picture on the opposite wall was unfamiliar.

Then remembrance flashed through her; she sprang up and, wrapping the woven bed cover over her nightgown, she slipped swiftly along the hall and down the service stairs on her side of the house. She heard people moving about the house, heard the cheerful morning noises, but she got to Lucy's room unseen.

She started to unbolt the connecting door, but it was already unbolted. She flung open the door to the wardrobe where young, bright dresses were hanging — yes, a man could well hide in there.

She wondered vaguely about fingerprints. She went to the barbed wire at the other end of the room, worried for fear it had been seen, and carefully gathered it into the small case again and thrust the case in the wardrobe.

In her own room she looked about. The bed clothes still lay humped in to the human semblance she had made. Had he come in and peered at them; had he realised that heaping up was purposeful?

She pulled open the desk drawer and took out her diary. Her eyes widened incredulously as she saw the revolver behind it.

Why had it been replaced? Did

he think she had not missed it the night before? It was like a mad game of cross purposes.

She opened the diary and there was no page of ragged writing; the page after the entries about Lucy was gone. It had been taken neatly out of the rings. So now she could not prove — But she had seen it. She knew.

There were voices under her window, Abbie Nordstrom's voice, talking to one of the boys about plant cuttings. Such an easy, normal voice. If she told Abbie any of this, Abbie would think she was crazy. She must be careful not to show any excitement, not to betray her awareness, to look well and unconcerned.

The day was cool and she put on a light wool frock of pale lavender and looked at her image in the glass with critical appraisal. She was too pale, and she looked as if she had on eye shadow, but she could not do anything about that. She brightened her lips and they smiled, in light mockery, at their reflection.

"You'll do," she said to her image. "You look very well for a girl who was to have died last night."

In the dining-room, Niel Nordstrom and John Cauldron were at the long refectory table where places were set, and she called out cheerful good mornings as she picked up a plate from the buffet table against the wall.

There were tiny sausages in a dish, fish kedgeree in another. There were eggs in a mound by a receptacle of boiling water, and an urn of coffee.

Niel looked over his shoulder at her. "Do you do this every morning?" The perfect English country house.

"You know we don't," she said. She brought her bacon and coffee to the place by his. "We have a sit-down breakfast at the little table by the window. This is a party."

"I don't imagine many English are keeping it up now. But you are certainly carrying on the tradition. Even cold toast." His eyes flicked amusedly to the silver rack of toast before him. "How you can eat that —"

"I suppose it's the way you were brought up."

"Your mother was brought up on hot breads. And your father ought to have been; he was born in the South. Your grandfather, too. But that first fellow set the pattern."

"I'm sorry. I'll get you some hot bread."

"Oh, Henry brought me hot corn bread from the kitchen. At least you've given up morning tea," he said, smiling. "Your grandfather had that."

She smiled back at him. "You think it's pretty silly, don't you? Traditional living."

"I think everything's pretty silly that doesn't make for the welfare of the human race."

John said mildly, "I might ask you to define welfare."

"No time for definitions," Niel got briskly to his feet. "All I know is that there's work to do."

He stopped and looked down at Helen. "How'd you sleep?"

"All right," after I found the right room," she said lightly. "I tried Lucy's for a change and I dreamed that Ida was calling me; was so vivid I actually went up to her. Then I went to the room next to Betty. I slept all right then. No reminders," she said impersonally.

"Yes, I think you do need a change. A complete change," said Niel slowly. Then, brisk again, "Well, I'm off. Abbie and I will be back to dinner. I'm dropping her at the house."

John said, when he had gone, "Niel's getting obsessed."

"I expect we'd be obsessed if we saw as much suffering as he does. And felt as warmly about it."

"The thing is," said John, getting up and going to the buffet table, "that Niel's ruthless about anything but the sick."

"Ruthless? I'd never have said that."

"You'd never notice it. . . . These are nice strawberries. They're from the new bed."

He brought back two plates of big red berries yet in their hulls and put a plate by her.

"Niel ate his fruit first," he remarked. "No English ways. . . . Are

COMPLETE FIRESIDE NOVEL

you really going to New York, Helen?"

He was so careful to make his voice expressionless that she almost said, "Not actually!" in reassurance, and then she thought suddenly that it might be fun to go to New York. She said, "Oh, I may!" very airily because John never argued when she was being airy and light.

Now he only said, "How soon?" and she said absently, "Oh . . . soon!"

"That's the girl!" said Burk from the door. "Never let a scent get cold. . . . You should have been out this morning," he went on, a warm smell of horse and leather entering with him. "It was a great morning. . . . A gallop would do you more good than a New York jaunt."

He roved along the buffet table, heaping his plate, then brought it to the place next to hers.

"I hope Henry keeps these sausages coming. Are they our own? I mean your own?" His voice was gay and chaffing.

"Yes. . . . Have you phoned Rita?"

"So early? Good heavens, no!"

"But I want to know if she's coming to lunch at the club. . . . Burk," she said in a lower tone, "did you two really quarrel last evening?"

"Why else did I arrive with another gal?"

"But that's so childish. . . . at this time."

"The time for a quarrel," said Burk, "is when you feel like it."

John got up and went out, Helen persisted, "But aren't you going to telephone?"

"You telephone if you like. This isn't my house and I'm not making the plans."

"It's your wedding," she retorted. "I certainly shall telephone." She got up and went out to the hall phone.

The maid at the Rands' said that Miss Rita wasn't home. "She's at Cauldron's Polly," she said importantly.

Helen began, "Oh, no," then said, "Thank you," and hung up.

"Burk," she reported, "she isn't home. The maid says she's here."

He said indifferently, "She said something about staying with a friend in town."

"What friend?"

"I haven't the faintest idea."

Helen looked at him impatiently. "The wedding is on Wednesday. This is Saturday. This isn't any time for funny business. Where did you leave her?"

"She got out, by her request, on Main Street, Main and Lee, to be exact. . . . You seem very edgy this morning. Didn't you sleep well?"

SHE replied, rather loudly, "Sleep well?" She saw Rawley in the doorway. "No, I had dreams of Ida's calling me; I went up to her to make sure she hadn't wanted me. Then I slept upstairs — in the room ready for Rita. I seem to sleep better in a strange room." She was careful not to look toward the doorway again.

"Well, you've got a lot of choices in this house," said Burk. "I can't see why you didn't put Calvin in a decent room instead of tucking him into that old nursery. Unless you've gone Edwardian," he said with a loud laugh. "Where is he? Isn't he down yet?"

"I haven't seen him." No, and she hadn't seen him last night, when she needed him.

Restively she got up. Rawley had vanished from the doorway and she heard the front door closing. She went out and saw him standing there, looking about indecisively.

Not breakfasting with his father, Helen thought bleakly. She would be sorry for this boy if there were not that dark suspicion coiled in her.

He had started to move away as she came out, and on impulse she called, "Mr. Rawley!"

He turned, his movement reluctant. She went towards him.

"Haven't you had your breakfast?"

"Not yet. I'm not hungry."

She was conscious that she was staring at him — as if she could read in a face what lay behind it — and

she said hastily, "But do eat now while the things are warm."

"You don't need to worry about me." There was something mocking in his voice; it was like Burk's mockery, she felt, though the voice was so different. He seemed to be studying her, and she thought: He wants to see if I've changed. If Calvin Morse has told me who he is.

He said, "I've got the pictures back on the walls. Like you wanted."

"Thank you, Mr. Rawley." Her voice was stiff for all her effort. She tried to make it light and impersonal.

"Have you found out anything more about the pictures? Even if the institute didn't send you," she said, very gaily now, "I think you know about pictures."

"Oh, I know what I'm doing, all right," he said confidently. He seemed reassured. Then he told her, "Yes, I've found out something. Something I'd like to show you."

"What is it?"

"It isn't a thing to be told. You have to see it. It's all ready to show you any time you can come up to the gallery. Could you come up now?"

He seemed suddenly eager, his eyes on hers. She had never noticed before, she thought, how unstartling his eyelids could be.

"Now?"

"Now's as good a time as any. It's a trick picture. Something the artist had fun with. You've got to see it just a certain way. . . . and just one person can see it at a time. Can you come now?"

She hesitated. This was what Calvin had warned her against; the risk she had promised not to run. But there was no risk with people about, when she was on her guard. And if Calvin could stay away last night, she could act on her own now. This waiting was unbearable.

"I'd love to see it," she said quickly. "Let's go."

They went up the stairs together. He opened the door into the gallery and she went through first, but kept on talking to him. "What picture is it? What sort of trick?"

Rawley closed the door. She couldn't suspect that; doors were kept closed in this house.

"It's the man in armor," he said, going towards the wall that faced the windows.

"Old Geoffrey Cauldron."

"That's the name on the list."

They stood before the painting. Helen felt utterly eager and alert. Last night she had been terrified, taken by surprise, helpless in the dark; now she felt no fear, but only wild impatience to have this suspense ended.

It would be dreadful to know, but definitely more dreadful not to know. If he made one threatening move she would know.

He might, she thought, standing by him, looking with bright interest at the picture — he might strike suddenly at her, to knock her out, then hurl a picture down on her, making it final. Pretending the picture had fallen. He didn't know that she was ready to run at a move.

"Take a good look at him as he is," said Rawley.

The painting was a big one, next to the small painting of the first Peter Cauldron, the man in armor a stiff fellow with a consciously noble look, as if the artist had worked hard to make him impressive.

It was a three-quarter portrait, the hands folded on the hilt of a sword, and everything was meticulously depicted in thick paint — the sheen of the armor, the design on it, the jewels on the fingers. Each hair of the eyebrows and the beard was an individual thing.

Helen looked back at Rawley questioningly.

He asked, "Do you know that painting on the edges of books? — I forget the name for it, but it's a way of painting on the edges of leaves so that you see a picture when you look straight at it. And then sometimes it's done so there's another picture when you slide back one cover and tilt the edges. It's very fine, delicate work; kings used to have it done for them."

"I know," said Helen. "I've seen a volume or two."

MURDER IN THE FAMILY

"Well, this is like that . . . in a way. The man looks one way when you look straight at him up at him a little, the way he'd always be shown. The way you're seeing him now. But the painter had some fun . . . I've got to show you."

He hurried off to the end of the gallery and came back with a ladder, which he set as close to the wall as he could get it, beside the picture.

"Oh, no, Helen was saying to herself, I shan't mount that, but Rawley said, 'I've got to get up there and move it out; I've got it on a long peg, so I can move it out. You have to tilt the bottom back into the wall.'"

He went up the ladder and his long arms reached towards the cord that was on the peg above the picture.

"You have to stand close," he said to her. "Close to the wall and look up. Then you'll see something."

He spoke excitedly. She looked up, watching him work the cord farther out to the end of the peg.

"I fixed this on purpose," he said. "Now you'll see what the artist thought of this Geoffrey Caudron. There was a glowing quality in his voice."

"But you've got to stand close," he repeated. "And push the bottom of the frame in against the wall. Then look up—"

She was a fool to do this, she thought. But she could jump away in time. The danger—if it was danger—was so obvious.

"Like this?" she asked, stepping forward and taking hold of the frame.

"Push it harder . . . to the wall." She pushed and the picture tilted inward at a pronounced angle. "Now look up!" he commanded.

She looked up. He had told the truth. This was a trick painting. The pigment piled on so thickly held a secret. No platitudes now, no noble composed face.

There were dark, grinning eyes leering down at her startled look, and a red, hungry mouth gaped out from the shining hairs of moustache and beard. It was an evil mouth. Avarice and meanness unmasked were in this face. She stared up at it, her attention wholly caught.

And then it happened. The face seemed to swoop down at her, the whole picture came toppling down at her.

She dropped her hold, springing sideways, but not quickly enough, and the frame struck her arm a glancing blow. She slipped and fell, and the painting fell beside her with a thud and a splintering.

She looked up at Rawley, conviction blazing in her. He was staring down in such utter dismay that her conviction became confusion; she did not know what to think.

And then there was no time to know what he would do next, for Betty Van Hoyt was calling from the doorway, "Helen, are you hurt?" and running to her to help her.

Helen scrambled to her feet, gripping her arm. She said breathlessly, "Oh, no! Only my arm!"

"Is it broken? Did that thing fall on you?"

"Yes, I was under—but it didn't hit me . . . Only my arm . . . No, it's not broken." Her eyes were still on Rawley, who was coming down the ladder.

"What goes on?"

That was Burk's voice behind them. The crash must have resounded, she thought. There was Calvin, in a bathrobe, his hair on end, coming in the other door, from the passage. Oh, if only she knew what to think.

Betty was exclaiming excitedly to Burk, "It knocked her down! She was on the floor! She says it's only her arm!"

"I slipped," said Helen. "I slipped . . . getting away from it. I was under it, holding it in."

Rawley said, in a flat voice, "I was showing her something . . . it got out of my hands. I had to get it out on the peg to have her see it, and the peg broke. It got away from me."

"You might have killed her!"

Burk roared. "You—"

Helen wanted to cry out, "Not

don't call him that!" But the word was out, and as Burk said it, Rawley lunged at him.

His blow struck Burk's chest above the heart with a force that made Burk grunt and stagger. He rallied into a fighter's crouch and drove a right to Rawley's head, and Rawley ducked and the blow passed him.

Burk rushed him and landed two quick blows, both on the face, and Rawley shook his head, his nose running blood, fainted with his left, then sent a right below Burk's belt. Burk bent over with a groan.

Calvin Morse was between them, and John, too—she had not known John had come. She heard Calvin's voice, sharp and edged, "Fight fair!" and she heard Rawley's voice, high and shrill, "You heard what he called me! That's a fighting word! Any fighting is fair enough for him!"

Then she heard Betty's voice, faint and uncertain against the voices of male anger, "You know he didn't mean anything."

Burk was straightening, holding on to himself. He managed to stand upright, he managed even a twisting smile and a jeering tone. "So that's a fighting word where you came from? It must have struck close."

"Oh, no, no," Helen was saying mutely. "Don't say that. Don't say that to him."

Rawley wiped the blood on his face with the back of his hand. His cheek was bruised and his lip was cut and the blood on his mouth made it thick and red.

He looked at Burk, hate and calculation in his eyes, and the malevolence of that look, the red, sly mouth, gave Helen the shocked feeling of seeing again the secret face in the painting.

Rawley said, "You'll eat that word, some of these days," and walked out of the gallery.

Burk made some joke. She did not want to hear it; she could not bear his forced lightness. John began to question her, and she told him about the picture and the trick of painting in it, and how it had to be tilted inward to be seen.

She was conscious that Calvin Morse looked at her scathingly. Without comment, he went up the ladder and examined the peg. The tip was dangling, held by only a splinter. From his face, as he came down, she could tell nothing.

John went to the picture. The canvas was unhurt, he said, and the frame could be repaired.

"But you might have been badly hurt," he said soberly.

BURK, his breath still uneven, proposed setting up the painting to get the trick effect.

"I don't want to see it again," said Helen. "It's horrible."

"Not till I've had breakfast," said Betty. "I was on my way down when I heard the smash."

"I'll go with you," said Burk.

"I'd better get shaved," said Calvin. "I seem to have overslept."

"So it's a blank," said Calvin. They were driving to the country club for luncheon, four of them in two cars, and Helen had told him about the man in the night. "You don't know who was in the wardrobe and you don't know whether Rawley meant that picture to fall?"

"Was the peg sawed?"

"It didn't feel like it. But it could have been weakened by a knife so it would splinter." And then he said, very coldly, "And you said I could trust you. To be careful."

"I was careful," she insisted. "I got away." She urged, "It was a chance to find out."

"But you didn't find out."

"N-no." She hurried into an offensive. "But if you'd been in the hall last night we could have trapped him."

"I told you how it was. Abbie came in." He added, "Incidentally, my revolver's gone. It was taken out of my room while I was having a bath."

She turned toward him, startled. "Then he suspects you?"

"Evidently. Or maybe he merely wanted a weapon."

"Mine was taken too. And this

morning it was in the drawer again. But the strangest thing—"

She told him about the line written in her diary, the desolate, deflected words, and the way the page had vanished to-day.

He looked at her so oddly that she protested, "You don't think I dreamed that all up?"

"I wish I could believe that. It would make life a lot simpler. But my gun's gone. I know you didn't dream that up."

"You can have mine. I hid it carefully before I left."

"No; you may need it. I'll give you some fresh cartridges for it. That package I gave Burk, from the hardware store, held blank cartridges. The hardwareman said he had ordered them."

She stared straight in front of her. Calvin's eyes flicked toward her. There was something touchingly innocent, exasperatingly stubborn, in that clear profile of hers.

She said, in a low voice, "It wasn't Burk."

"No? Then it must be Rawley." He pressed, "If you're so sure of that, why aren't you sure he let the picture fall?"

"Because he looked so . . . startled. So chagrined."

"He could be chagrined that he plot hadn't worked."

"It could be," she admitted. "I just don't know . . . And it could be that it was Rawley in my room last night, and yet this picture thing might be an accident. I just don't know."

"Neither of us knows a thing about anything. This isn't a game for amateurs." His voice was hard. He didn't know when he had been in such a bad temper. It was lack of sleep perhaps, yet he'd gone to sleep again after breakfast.

"We'll know more when we find out about the milk. I gave it to that cat of Carl's with the broken leg. He was going to have to kill it, anyway."

"We'll only know about the milk. Not about who drugged it."

She said hesitantly, "I suppose it's because I find it so hard to believe."

"You don't want to believe it of Rawley because he's a poor chap who had a bad start. I think he's a sly, cocky devil who could be mean as dirt. You don't want to believe it of Burk because he's your brother."

He went on, his voice rising, "And you don't want to believe it of Tex Miller because he's another poor chap with a nice smile. Tex Miller is a chump who could get silly drunk and grab at what he wants. Tex is out of these last devilments, but he may be involved in the first. You'll simply have to make up your mind to believe it of somebody."

She was silent, and he said in the same blithering way, "Do you want to believe it of John?"

"Of John?"

"Of course you don't because he's near and dear to you. And I'll concede that John is out because he has no motive. And he has every motive for keeping you alive." And to himself he said, "Because he's in love with you, and you've promised to marry him."

Aloud he said, "Or do you want to believe it of Niel?"

She said, "Niel?" in the same astonished way she had said, "Of John?"

"You could, you know. He's been here every time that anything happened. He couldn't have hurt Lucy, but he's got a motive to get rid of you. He gets a hundred thousand in your will . . . or the hospital does, which is the same thing to him. He told me he'd kill himself if he were insured for a hundred thousand. He said to me, 'What's one person?'"

She looked at him. "Calvin, how can you think such things?"

"How can I not think them? If I use my head. You don't imagine I like thinking them, do you? But I have to face facts. I was facing them all night in that hall."

They had been driving slower and slower, but the country club was before them now.

She roused from the silence that had lasted since Calvin's last words and said, in a light, trying-to-be-funny voice, "Well, it's nice to know John hasn't a motive. It's nice there's someone I know who isn't trying to kill me."

Calvin stopped the car. He put his hand over hers.

"I'm not trying," he said. "Yet I'm letting you risk yourself, and I don't like it. Shall we stop it, Helen?"

Shall we throw in the sponge and call for the cops?"

"Oh, no! If we sit tight, he'll make some move."

"Yes, and the next time the picture or whatever the booby trap is will hit your head."

"At least now, if the milk is drugged, we'll have something definite to give the police."

"Yes . . . if it is. We can give them a dead cat." He asked dryly, "What have you planned for to-night? You can't work the milk thing again. He must know now that you're suspicious, for you didn't drink it."

"I'll say I spilled it last night. I'll take some up myself and leave it about . . . But I don't like your sitting up all night. We might tell John and get him to take a turn, only—"

Only that would risk John, he finished silently. He waited to see what she would say instead of that.

"Only John would put a stop to it." "You couldn't prevail on him as you prevail on me?"

HELLEN said, "You sound so cross, Calvin. I mean John's too cautious. And it would take too long to convince him. He didn't believe in those anonymous letters."

"I might not have believed in them—so completely—if I hadn't discovered, the next day, who had written them."

"You did?" Her eyes flashed astonishment at him. "The girl with Tex? Why, how—"

"Very simply. She walked in the next morning and told me. She was very uneasy about it and wanted some legal advice. There was no harm in the date with Miller, really, but she hadn't told because she thought it would play hob with her plans. You see, it's Rita Rand."

He ignored Helen's startled sound. "Tex Miller had fallen for her, and she'd seen something of him till Burk stopped it. She felt she had to see him a last time to make him understand she was serious about marrying Burk."

Helen didn't need to know, he thought, how wildly crazy Rita had been about Tex Miller or that Tex had a wife from whom he was separated.

He went on, "I don't see any harm in the meeting, but it seems she had lied to Burk and she was sure he'd think the worst. And he would be furious to have her get up in court and tell the story. She was afraid Burk would leave her flat. But I insisted that she tell him. My idea at the time was to get all the facts to the prosecution, so there would be a more comprehensive man-hunt."

"That was before you and I had our bright idea of setting traps. I didn't see her, after we'd cooked that up, to call off the confession. I didn't think about it, really. And now I am exceedingly bothered," said Calvin deliberately, "because it is now nearly one o'clock, and no one knows where she is, not since Burk left her last evening."

He added in explanation, "I wanted to talk to her, so I phoned, and the maid said she was at the Folly. I phoned her father and he thought she was there."

"Oh, I can tell you that! Burk told me she was going to stay with some friend in Somerset."

"I thought of that. I asked her father for her friends in town and he gave me some names. No one knew anything."

"She's to be at this luncheon. I told her I was giving it for her."

"Why wasn't she home dressing for it? I don't like it," said Calvin, not looking at her, but staring ahead at the country club, "because I'm the one who pressured her into telling Burk at once. And it may have occurred to Burk that she was the only witness who could give Tex Miller an alibi."

He added, "It might suit Burk to have Tex Miller convicted. A little item that hadn't suggested itself to me when I was talking to her."

They sat in silence. Then Helen said, very quietly, her voice carefully repressed, "You have to think of that, of course, because you think of Burk as you do. But other things could have happened. She could have picked up a ride home—she'd do that. Something could have happened with her looks—"

"That could be."

"Or she could have gone to some friends her father didn't think of."

"She could."

"She may be at the club this minute. She may have put on the dress last night she was going to wear to-day, so she didn't go home to change."

"I hope you're right," said Calvin. "I hope it's just one of my unpleasant thoughts. I hadn't meant to tell you before there was need to, but if she isn't there someone has got to start looking."

There was a big Saturday crowd at the club, but Rita Rand was not there. Helen vanished from the cocktail throng to telephone, and when she came back she told Calvin that Rita's father was trying to locate her.

"I had to tell him that she and Burk had quarrelled," said Helen, "to account for her getting out in Somerset. He tried to joke that off, but he was upset. He said she might be staying away from the luncheon because she was 'miffed.' 'Is that likely?'"

"I'll find out from Burk how serious the quarrel was."

"Don't tell him you know the reason for it. Don't speak of the aim for Tex Miller."

She said, "Very well," stiffly, and went off.

He could see her speaking urgently to Burk, and Burk shrugging it off. Betty Van Hoyt, surrounded by friends who had rushed to welcome her, was introducing them to Calvin Bill Hutchinson, with whom he used to play tennis, was pumping his hand.

Then Bill called to Burk, "Boy, am I looking forward to next Wednesday! To see you get the ball and chain about your ankle." He looked about and asked, "Where's the girl?"

"I wouldn't know."

"Run out on you, eh?" said Bill too heartily, after a moment.

And Helen said, too brightly, "We're expecting her later."

The luncheon turned into a luncheon for the returned Mrs. Van Hoyt. Betty was a star performer. Calvin thought; she kept the talk going easily. Her only mistake—and how could Betty know it was a mistake?—was to drag in the morning's excitement of the falling picture and Helen's near escape.

"Where is your mysterious artist?" Bill Hutchinson asked. "Why don't you produce him?"

Burk said curtly, "He's a gut-snipe!"

"Oh, no, he isn't!" said Helen in that same gay voice. "He comes from a very good family!"

Calvin got away as soon as luncheon was over. Helen slipped off with him; she asked him to drive her to Somerset.

"Some of us ought to see Mr. Rand," she said. "Burk won't. He says Rita is sulking somewhere and that he's not going to pay attention to her dramatics."

"I see," said Calvin politely.

There was a glass wall between him and Helen Cramer now.

She said, elaborately polite herself, "Drop me at the bank and I'll talk to Mr. Rand. I think we ought to get the sheriff to notify the police in the next towns, to see if she's been seen there."

"I imagine Rand has already started inquiries."

"If we could only be sure that she hadn't accepted some ride!"

Calvin said to himself, grimly, "Go on; skate over the thin ice. Pretend while you can." For all his sympathy, he could not shake off his antagonistic mood.

"Don't be afraid I'm going to mention my own peculiar suspicions now," he said bluntly.

"The sheriff will look just as hard for her without knowing the knots we're tied up in. I'll wait around and take you back to the Folly. I want to find out how that cat is."

Helen reappeared quickly. "Rand is off with the sheriff now. I'll phone from the house."

They drove to the Folly in silence. Helen said, "Drive through the arch. Carl's house is down at the back of the stables."

He drove through the arch, and then through the courtyard, where half the stables had been turned into a garage, and then down the hedged road to Carl's house.

Carl's wife met them.

"Oh, the kitty?" she said. "Oh"

put her in the incinerator. She did you know. Right after you were here Mrs. Cromer. But it's just as well. That leg wouldn't mend right. She'd never be a good mother again."

"But how—how did she die? I mean," said Helen. "She seemed all right except for that leg."

"Well, there must have been some infection. She just went to sleep and died."

"I see. Yes, it's probably as well."

They walked to the house in silence. Then Helen said, in an ironic voice, "So we haven't even a dead cat to show—I thought we'd get it analyzed."

Calvin said, "I was thinking about what would have happened to you if you'd taken the milk."

The sheriff came after dinner. Earl Sutton was a mild-spoken man with a soft voice and very serious eyes. He settled into a chair with an air of comfortable occupancy, but the others, Calvin saw, kept to the edges of their seats.

There was a young, sandy-haired officer, there was George Rand, and there was, to Calvin's surprise, A. J. Regan. Politely they declined the after-dinner coffee.

They had asked for Burk Cauldron, and Burk asked, with a parody of expansiveness, "Now, what can I do for you, gentlemen?"

"Well, sir," said the sheriff, "we're after a description of what Miss Rand was wearing last evening, if you can give one. Her father says he did not notice."

George Rand said, "I merely saw her a moment in the hall . . . as she was going out."

"I think you are taking it very seriously," said Burk.

"Twenty-four hours is a long time for a girl to be away," said Regan.

"Yes, it is. But Miss Rand is a very unusual girl. Very capable of taking care of herself. . . . What was she wearing? Something light. Really white, I guess. She had a black coat lined with green. But the coat was left in my car. In the back. Her bag, too. Neither of us happened to think of it."

"A white dress," said Sutton. The sandy-haired young officer had produced a pad and was writing it all down. "Any hat?"

"No hat. Black sandals. Nylons. And a string of jade I'd given her. No one that she's encountered casually could possibly know the beads had any value," said Burk, as if reassuring them.

"Just where did you leave her, Mr. Cauldron?"

"On Main Street. At the corner of Main and Lee."

"Can you place the time?"

"Only vaguely. It was early in the evening. We'd had dinner on the other side of town, at the Dixie Inn, and were driving home."

"Well, would you say it was seven or eight or nine?"

"Not seven. I know we'd dined early—about six-thirty, I'd say. But we took quite a little time to it. And the Dixie is several miles out. I dare say it was about eight. Does it matter?"

"We'd like to fix the time, if we can," said the sheriff mildly.

Burk turned and addressed Betty Van Hoyt, who had retired to the background with the Nordstroms. "What time would you say I came for you, Betty?"

"It was after nine—quite a little after. I'd meant to start earlier, but I was slow getting packed."

The sheriff nodded. He asked Burk, "Had you planned to call for Mrs. Van Hoyt?"

"No. That was impluse." Burk smiled. "Put what difference does that make?"

"Just getting it straight in my mind," said the sheriff. "Let's see. If it was after nine when you called for this lady, and about eight when you left Miss Rand—"

"It might have been later. I don't know. And I didn't go directly to Mrs. Van Hoyt's. I dropped into a tavern and had a drink."

George Rand said sharply, "Just where did you leave my daughter like that?"

"She asked me to." Burk looked at him with not too veiled derision. "Well, had an extremely rigorous argument, if you're interested in knowing why. What you might call the very devil of a row."

In the same detached, sardonic way, he went on, "And if you want to know what it was about it was

about that young killer that Sutton's got locked up. Tex Miller. Miss Rand chooses to believe he isn't guilty, but a victim of circumstantial evidence. And I think he's guilty as the devil. Naturally our difference was pronounced."

The sheriff's eyes went involuntarily to Helen, then quickly away. "Naturally," he said in an embarrassed voice. He added musingly, "She doesn't think him guilty?"

"He's too good-looking to be guilty," said Burk lightly. "I understand several girls in town hold that view. But I lost my temper."

Rand said, "And left her to get home alone?"

"She wasn't going home. Or to the Folly. She spoke of staying with a friend in town. I didn't ask what friend."

"Lee and Main," said the sheriff slowly. "That's in the centre of town. Then why would you say, Mr. Cauldron, that you and she were driving past Laurel Avenue a little after eight o'clock? That's on the edge of town on the way here, you know."

Burk stared. "You seem to be checking up on me, sheriff."

Sutton said patiently, "We're trying to find where she was last. Some people in a car saw her crossing Laurel Avenue. That puzzled me because you say you left her at Lee and Main."

"Well, I didn't drop her at Lee and Main going through town. Our quarrel lasted halfway to the country club. The woods there were no place to leave her, so I turned back. Now does that answer your question?"

"It answers that one," said the sheriff amiably.

"But I've got one," said Regan. He leaned forward, his squared jaw bluntly hostile. "If you drove her back, why wasn't she with you in the car? I saw you driving back alone. You were alone in the car, coming into town. It was after eight-thirty then."

Calvin lightened in attention. There was suspicion in Regan's voice. Regan didn't know what Calvin Morse knew, but he knew that Burk's temper wasn't to be trusted."

"Oh, well!" said Burk, but still sounding very ironically amused. "I'll have to tell you the whole thing. We had our fight, as I said. She didn't like something I said, so we parted, just like that, out in the country. And I drove back, thinking I'd get Mrs. Van Hoyt. But before I got into town I cooled down. I knew I couldn't leave her like that, to walk home, as she'd said she wanted to. I turned around and went back."

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didn't care the slightest bit what has happened to her."

"Nothing's happened to her," said Burk. "She's working up a little excitement to get me worried."

"Well, we hope it's like that," said the sheriff, getting to his feet. He turned to Helen Cromer.

"I'll let you know if we hear anything, Mrs. Cromer," he said kindly. "In the meantime, we'll have to do some looking."

"Let's get going on that," said Regan, jumping up.

Calvin said, "I believe I'll go along with you."

"All right, all right," said Burk. "If you think it's necessary." He got up slowly. "Come on, John; let's never have it said the Cauldrons failed in a woman hunt."

From the back of the room, Niel said, "I'll go too."

The sheriff turned back. "That isn't necessary, doctor. You save your strength. There's a lot of young fellows I can rout out by phone, and we'll spread out by twos and start to comb the country."

The young sandy-haired officer stuffed his notebook in his pocket and buttoned his jacket over it. "We'll start close to the road first. If she got a pickup ride, they wouldn't be carrying her very far."

The sheriff gave a warning glance towards George Rand's back. "You button your lip, son. Do your thinking inside your head."

A night search was slow, though after the moon came out the vision was better. The men worked in twos, and Calvin Morse was paired with the young sandy-haired officer who had been in the search for Lucy Cromer's murderer and talked incessantly about it.

"I think we ought to get the bounds on this," he said.

After a few fields and a wood had been thrashed through, the search was abandoned till morning.

"Be seeing you at sun-up," said the young officer cheerfully.

Calvin drove back to the Folly to find Burk and John were already there.

"Silly business, wasn't it?" said Burk. "Have a nightcap?"

"Thanks. I'll pour it."

Burk had hot toddies on a tray. Calvin hunted up a bottle and poured out a drink. Helen appeared suddenly behind him.

"I'll change my mind," she said in a casual, carrying voice. "Pour me one, Calvin. Straight." In a lower voice, she said, her voice remote and indifferent, "My sleeping with Betty. Worrying about Rita is the explanation. So get your sleep."

"Thanks," he said briefly.

The phone rang. John answered it and said to Calvin, "It's for you, Morse."

It was Regan. He said, "I found her."

There was a quality in his voice that fed Calvin's forebodings.

"In a ditch," said Regan. "By the road. The bushes hid her."

"Is she—can she say what happened?"

There was a pause. "She won't be saying," said Regan harshly.

Shock held Calvin silent. Then he said, "She's dead?"

"Next thing to it. Concussion. In a coma. It seems to have been a hit and run."

He went on talking in jerky sentences, giving the details, and Calvin listened in silence.

"I'll see you to-morrow." He hung up and turned around to the half circle of listeners. A hard anger was grinding in him. He spoke directly to Burk. "She isn't dead."

"But she's got herself hurt, has she?" said Burk levelly.

Abbie demanded, "Just how badly is she hurt?"

Calvin repeated what Regan had just told him. He said, "She's still unconscious, but she may come to at any moment. She's bruised, but there are no broken bones."

"Who's looking after her?" asked Niel. "Brennan?"

He didn't say.

Betty said, "And she was lying there all the time? All last night and to-day?"

"All the time," said Calvin. He could see Rita Rand, a limp bundle in a ditch, her bright hair hidden by the bushes. Cars had gone past. "When we were playing bridge,"

COMPLETE FIRESIDE NOVEL

said Betty. Her grey-blue eyes were very sober and pitying. "And lurching at the club. It makes me feel guilty. Doesn't it you, Burk?"

"It does not," said Burk defiantly. "It's a wretched accident, but I refuse to feel responsible for what a girl chooses to do."

Calvin thought: Or for what is done to her.

Regan's office was a one-room affair over a corner drugstore. There was a transom above the door which Calvin Morse thoughtfully closed when he went in.

Regan sat down in a swivel chair before an old-fashioned roll-top desk, nodded towards it and said, "Inspires rural confidence in low fees," then swung around to face Calvin.

Tersely he told the story of the night before. He had kept on searching after the others stopped, and it was he who had found Rita Rand.

"She was close to the road," he said. "All of our cars had been going back and forth, but the ditch was deep there and the bushes hung over her."

Calvin nodded grimly. "Anything can have happened," Regan went on. "She might have jumped to get out of the way of a car and slipped and struck her head and rolled into the ditch, or she might have been knocked down and got up and staggered into it—we won't know till she comes to."

"Is there any change?"

Regan shook his head. "She's just lying there as if asleep. Doctor says she'll be all right," he said, a little insistently. "It may go on for days or she may snap out at any moment."

He added, "There are no cracks or breaks, that's one good thing for sure. And her face isn't hurt." He said soberly, "That kid would have felt badly to come to and find that face of hers was hurt."

Again Calvin nodded. He was still charged with relief that Rita Rand was living.

"Either Burk Cauldron is lying about where he left her or she changed her mind about staying in town and started to walk home. You heard him say her bag was in the car."

He went on thoughtfully, "There's one thing that makes me think he left her off in town, as he said. My office here is on Main Street and I live on Lee. I was out that evening and there wasn't a light in either place. Susie Pragg—that's my landlady's daughter—told me she thought that Rita Rand walked by our place sometime after dusk. Susie has eyes like a cat. She wasn't sure enough to make a statement to the police, but she ribbed me about it. Because I took Rita to dinner . . .

"PAUSING for a moment, he said, "I think that maybe Rita wanted to get in touch with me, wanted me to drive her home. I wish I'd been home."

"I wish you had."

"Of course that could be only Susie's idea. As I said, she wasn't sure enough to tell the sheriff."

"All we can do then is wait."

"That's all."

"In the meantime—" Calvin Morse got a big envelope out of his pocket.

"I've been wanting to ask you two or three questions about Tennessee law," he said, "but now I'm going to do more. I'm going to retain you as counsel and put this thing on the table. Here's the story."

Quickly, concisely, he told of Helen Cromer's uneasiness at what seemed attempts on her life and of her appeal to him to come. He told of the renewed attempt at smothering, from which the phone had saved her.

"Her idea," he said, "was that there was some criminal, some madman, lurking in the woods—the one who had killed her daughter. That is one of the things that made her feel that Tex Miller was not guilty. But to me," said Calvin, "it wasn't like that. Only someone inside the house could have drugged those drinks and had access to her room."

Regan's eyes went quickly to the envelope in Calvin's hands, then back to his face.

"That's it," said Calvin. "Motive. That's what I was looking for. Why I asked for this copy. . . . That suggestion hit her hard—at least the suspicion against one of my suspects hit her hard. We hadn't anything but conjecture to bring to the police, and she was determined to find something positive. She reasoned that if her assailant did not know he was suspected, he would try again. The idea was that I'd be on watch to catch him. A lot of use I was!"

He told of the glass of milk left out, and how Helen had heard the sounds from the wardrobe and saved herself by pretending Ida was at the door.

"Of course that had to happen before I got on guard," he said bitterly. My aunt came to my room and delayed me a bit. By then it was all over. That stuff was quick-acting. The cat Helen fed it to died right away."

He set down item after item. Regan listened without comment, his forehead knotted. Finally he asked bluntly, "Whom do you suspect?"

Calvin spread out the will. "Under this will there are two people who—but first there's something you should know." Quickly he sketched Rawley's story.

Regan said, "Burk's woods baby, eh? And Burk doesn't know?"

"I don't suppose Burk ever knew he existed."

"Queer he didn't spot him, if you did, using his own name."

"I don't think Burk ever took a good look at him. It happens. I've an uncanny memory for faces, and that girl had an unusual face. I asked Rawley straight out—oh, very pleasantly—and he was taken off base and said a lot more than he'd intended. That's how I know Burk went through a hill-preacher ceremony with the girl, and that Rawley has this paper of his that he seems to think will prove him legitimate."

Regan's eyes narrowed to slits of calculation. "It's a funny thing his being in the office of the man that Mrs. Cromer wrote to—to ask to come here."

"It is a funny thing. But funny things happen."

"That's for sure. . . . Does Burk know yet?"

"No. Rawley asked me not to say who he was—not till he was ready or something like that—and I more or less agreed. But I told Helen Cromer. . . . I've a notion that if this chance through Lambert hadn't happened, Rawley would have found his way here on some pretext or other. He's probably been waiting till he was of age. With his belief in his paper he's a suspect that sticks out like a sore thumb."

"But—"

"But he's taking chances, not getting his legitimacy established? Why, if he'd gone to court first he'd have had no opportunity to get into the Folly unsuspected, to get at Lucy and Helen. Another thing—he may have certain rights as an illegitimate child. I don't know the Tennessee law and I wanted to ask you about that. But my notion is he thinks he can prove he is legitimate. So he's got motive."

He smiled grimly. "Yet we haven't a definite thing on him except that he let a picture fall on Helen Cromer yesterday. But Helen isn't certain it wasn't accidental. Much as she'd rather suspect him."

Regan asked, "Rather than whom else?"

"Than her brother. Burk is obvious, except to his sister. The Folly would go to his child."

"He hasn't a child to take."

"He'll produce one, undoubtedly. The ultimate title doesn't have to vest instantly, you know. In New York, if he ever had a child, that child would take. There's been a statute there for about a hundred years doing away with the common-law rule that a contingent remainder must vest at or before the terminating of the preceding estate. Burk would be guardian of the infant for

MURDER IN THE FAMILY

twenty-one years. He'd have the Polly for twenty-one years, and if the child died he'd inherit from it."

"You're going too fast for me, counselor. Let's look at that will again." Regan came and looked over Calvin's shoulder, his blunt-tipped fingers moving slowly beneath the lines.

Calvin said, "One of the things I wanted to ask was how Tennessee takes care of—"

"That's what I thought," Regan's finger had come to rest beneath the words "to the heirs of my son Burk." He said, "This isn't New York, counselor. Did you ever hear of Ryan versus Monaghan?"

"After a moment Calvin said, 'I don't recall—'

"A Tennessee case. You wouldn't run across it in a hundred years unless you practised here."

"But what—"

"That's a case that turned on the old common-law doctrine that no one is the heir of a living person. And in that case," said Regan, "heir" was held to mean 'heir,' and not construed to mean 'child.'"

Calvin exploded. "Good heavens, you mean—" He said sharply, "Have you got that case?"

Regan went to his shelves, searched about and laid a volume before Calvin.

"Here you are, counselor," he said. "Ryan versus Monaghan. Ninety-nine Tennessee, three three eight."

Calvin read it carefully. He said slowly, "Then . . . unless Burk's dead . . . unless he predeceased Helen, his child can't take."

"Not in Tennessee," said Regan. "That case is still apparently Tennessee law."

Calvin found himself arguing. "But that decision defeats the intent of the testator—"

"It probably did in the Monaghan case. In the Cauldron will, I wouldn't know. I wouldn't know what was in Peter Cauldron's mind. You notice that the Cauldron will follows as closely as possible the phraseology of the will in the Monaghan case?"

He leaned over Calvin's shoulder as Calvin read the will again, checking the words against the printed page.

"Will Bently knew what he was doing when he drew this," he said. "So Peter Cauldron must have known. It could be that Peter was packing a wallop for the future. He had it in for Burk. He wasn't going to let Burk see a child of his in the Polly. So he left it to Burk's heirs, and if Burk was still alive, when Helen died without children, then Burk just didn't have any heirs . . . A very nasty wallop."

Calvin said, "A New York court would have no difficulty in construing the word 'heirs' to mean 'children.' I could put my hands on several cases to that effect . . . That's what misled me."

"You had it thrown at you cold, counselor."

"I took for granted what people were saying the will meant," Calvin said, chagrined. "But why don't they know this? Helen Cromer doesn't know. She supposes—"

"Probably Bently never explained it. Might not have thought it important. And it could be," said Regan, "that Bently put this over, himself. To pay off some score against Burk."

"That's all beside the point," said Calvin. "Why the word 'heirs' was used. It was used. And nobody, nobody in the family, knows its implications. I have seen and heard enough to be sure of that. So Burk could perfectly well be acting under the belief—"

"He could. He wouldn't see any reason to get a Tennessee opinion on it. And Bently wouldn't open up—he's a tight-mouthed little clam."

"Yep," said Regan thoughtfully. "It looks like Burk hasn't stumbled over Ryan and Monaghan yet."

"Nor Rawley . . . I imagine that Rawley's mother got hold of a copy of the will when it was probated. To Rawley it would look like plain sailing. If he could prove he was legitimate."

"So you're still got your two suspects."

"I think so. Very definitely."

"Plus the third."

"The third? Yes, there is a third possibility," said Calvin reluctantly. "Not one I like to think about." Then he stopped short and looked quickly at Regan. "What third did you mean? Who gets the Polly if Burk's child cannot take?"

"John Cauldron."

"I see . . . I wasn't sure . . . John Cauldron must know this."

"He may. He may not. He's bookish, I understand, but that doesn't mean he knows law," Regan argued. "And Bently may have seen no reason to tell him."

"John Cauldron has a very exact mind," said Calvin. He thought about the secrecy of John's smile. "I can imagine his knowing it and keeping the knowledge to himself."

"Maybe out of delicacy," said Regan. "At any rate, he's the fair-haired boy who gets the Polly, if Helen Cromer dies as of this moment. So, for my money, you've got three suspects."

"The trouble with that—" said Calvin. He stopped, then went on very crisply. "He's going to marry Mrs. Cromer. They are to be married in the autumn. This is strictly off the record."

Regan eyed him interestedly. "You sure of that?"

"He told my aunt. He told her yesterday. They don't want it known yet while he is living there."

"Well, that let's him out," Regan said. "He's sitting pretty."

John Cauldron had told Abbie. The words kept twisting back and forth in Calvin's mind. But Helen had not told her. Helen had not told him. And Helen had not turned to John Cauldron when she felt menaced.

John Cauldron had been sitting pretty, as Regan said, as long as Helen was unmarried, as long as he could watch her movements. There was no need for violence. Not then. But Lucy had been growing up. She was going away to school in the autumn.

It seemed unbelievable that John could live in such intimacy and could plan such horror.

But when you live long enough with a thought it loses its strangeness, it becomes so firmly embedded in intention that John himself might not know when it had ceased to be a fearfully debated thing and become a fixed resolve.

Calvin said abruptly, "I've got to go. Thanks for everything."

Regan was looking at him curiously. He said, "There was some other fellow you had in mind—"

"That can wait."

Helen had to know this. And he had to know if John had told the truth about himself and Helen.

HE was getting into his car when a "Calvin" in a clear feminine voice made him turn. Betty Van Hoyt was coming out of the drugstore.

"I saw your car," she said gaily. "I bought six different kinds of bath salts to keep at that counter, not to miss you."

"Any news?"

"News? No. I haven't heard a thing. I left right after you did this morning. I took one half the list of guests and your aunt took the other, and between us we've been keeping the wires busy. But it's done, thank heaven! Every guest has been notified not to show up. You know," said Betty, "it was a little quaint—my telephoning people not to come to Burk's wedding."

"You and Abbie both left?" said Calvin, ignoring the quaintness. "You mean Helen's alone?"

"Alone!" Betty echoed. "Well, hardly! Everybody was bustling about; she was up to her neck in telephones to people to come and take the extra chairs away, and to ice-cream people not to deliver."

"Yes," said Calvin vaguely. "Yes . . . May I take you back?"

"I'm not going back till night, thank you. And I've got my own car. But you could run me out to the White Poodle and buy me a cold drink."

"I'd like to," said Calvin. "But I can't just now. Give me a rain check."

"That's the kiss of death," said Betty.

They looked at each other a moment.

"Oh, well," she said resignedly; then, "What's the word about Rita Rand?"

"Just the same, Regan said. No change since I was there this morning."

He was getting into his car, a hand on the door to pull it shut, but Betty came closer, and he had to hold it open.

"Don't think too badly of Burk," she said. "He's behaving badly, not showing he's sorry. But you know how Burk is. If you try to force him into an attitude, that's the one he won't take."

"It's no business of mine what attitude he takes," said Calvin curtly. "Well, be seeing you."

He drove on quickly. He had a feeling of having been too long away. He had gone with Niel to the hospital to see Rita Rand, and he had gone to the Nordstroms to look over his mail, because, after all, he had an office in New York that wanted instructions about a certain case, and he had waited about for Regan, who had been in court on an assault case.

Heaven only knew what Helen had been up to during that time. The picture Betty had given ought to have been reassuring, but he wasn't reassured. She was probably standing under another picture with Rawley, he thought, or sitting on the edge of the tower with Burk.

The mood of cold exasperation was forming in him again. Then he thought that she was probably in the library holding hands with John. Oh, the devil with that!

She wasn't going to like what he had to say about John. And he wasn't going to like what she'd say. She'd tell him she was going to marry John. For John wasn't good enough for her.

A car from the Polly was coming across the level ground towards him, stopping just in front of him. John Cauldron was in it, leaning towards his left-hand window, and Calvin drew abreast and stopped.

"Going to Somerset," said John. "Helen wants some things. Anything I can get you?"

"Just come from there." He was staring too hard at that plain brown face and turned his eyes away. The face told nothing. The voice told nothing.

"See you at dinner," said John politely. "Good day."

Calvin said "Good day" and drove on. He went through the archway to the garage court, left his car there, and stepped into the kitchen. Ida looked up with some astonishment on her face from the dough she was kneading on a floured board.

"Where's Miss Helen?" he asked. "Why, she's gone to meet you."

"I didn't meet her on the road."

"She didn't go out the road. She went out the fields."

"To meet me?"

Ida looked down on the dough and began to flip it about vigorously. "I got that idea," she said offhandedly. "Did she say to you she was going to meet me?"

"I don't rightly remember. I just got that idea."

"Ida, please! This is important. I've got to know where she is," Calvin said quickly. "It isn't safe to have her out alone. We're not sure that young man they've looked up is the right one. Someone in the woods has been following Miss Helen when she was alone."

Ida looked sharply at him and her small, inflexible-looking face altered as his words went home. Without speaking, she dusted off her hands and went up the back stairs. When she came back, she handed him a small piece of paper.

"This was in her room," she said. "I found it when I was picking up after her."

There was a pencil scrawl on the paper:

"Meet me as soon as you can at our old Hideaway. Important. C."

The scrawl was not unlike his writing. The Hideaway. Their old meeting place. The rock cave by Cairn's Pool.

Even as he started at it something in him was thinking. This is Burk Rawley could not know about the Hideaway.

There was open fear in his voice when he asked, "When did she go?"

"Not so long ago . . . just so long

it takes me to run up and straighten her room. She'd got on her riding clothes. Then I took down my bread—"

"All right, Ida. Thank you. I'll catch up with her."

He ran out to the back. Before the stables a boy was polishing a bridle in slow motion.

"I want a horse," said Calvin. "Will you get me one at once?"

The boy's hands paused. His eyes roamed over Calvin's tweeds. "You mean right now?"

"Right now. Is there a horse?"

"Not a right good horse," said the boy slowly. "Mr. Burk, he out on Hunter, and Miss Helen's on Dandy . . . and Mr. Burk had Dolly out this morning and brought her in lame."

"Any horse," said Calvin desperately. "Any horse that can move."

The boy chuckled. "Castor can move alright. But he's right ornery when he takes a notion."

"Castor then. I'll help you saddle."

Luckily, the horse was in his stall. Calvin was wild with an impatience that communicated itself instantly to the big bay.

THE boy said soothingly, "Whoa, now; whoa."

"Which way did Miss Helen go?"

The boy's hand stopped as he answered, "Way down the fields. Into the woods. I dunno whichaway she went then."

"And Mr. Burk? Did he go out before Miss Helen?"

"Quite some time before. A little after Mr. Rawley went out."

"Rawley out too? But Rawley could not know of the Hideaway. Wait . . . Burk could have told the Rawley girl in the old days. The girl might even have stolen there to meet him. He asked, 'Was Rawley walking?'"

"Yes, sir-ree. He was walking as if the devil was after him and catching up."

The big bay was saddled at last, blowing through widened nostrils as the boy held him for Calvin to mount.

"He don't like to go through no gates," said the boy. "That's where he does tricks. He'd rather jump."

That was fine, Calvin thought grimly. That was just fine. He never could stay on a jumping horse. He'd get pitched off just when Helen was needing him. Whoever had sent her that note was waiting for her in the Hideaway.

He headed Castor across the fields and the bay stretched out in a long gallop.

Calvin's trousers worked up about his calves. The stirrups were too long for the Italian seat he had acquired, and he slid back into something like an old cavalier's form. He took the pasture fields, and, luckily, the gates in them were open, except the final one at the woods.

He felt the horse gathering under him and he leaned forward, gripping the saddle without shame. Somewhat to his surprise, he was still in his seat as the horse landed and streaked on.

He pulled him in; he saw where recent tracks led ahead of them. In a short distance the road forked and he took the trail to the left. The marks of the other horse were there.

It would not be long, at this speed, to Cairn's Pool. Helen could be only a few minutes ahead of him. The hoofmarks showed that her horse was going slowly.

It was a curving way with no long perspectives, and he heard the horse coming before he saw it. It came galloping, racing as if in panic, the saddle turned.

The fear in Calvin tightened. He had to swing into the bushes, and as the horse plunged past, its eyes white-rimmed, Castor reared and tried to follow, and Calvin had to fight him before he could force him on.

He galloped warily, his eyes searching the way ahead, his hands ready to meet the instant need for pulling up. But there was no sign of Helen. There were two lines of tracks now—the one going, the one coming in wild haste.

The pool was just ahead. There was a thicket, he remembered, shutting off all view of it; now the thicket was taller, a high hedge of green, the opening through it overgrown.

Calvin slid from his sweating horse

and tied him to the nearest tree. Another horse had been there. The ground was pawed, as if he had been tied. The hoofmarks, going away, were deep at the tips, and wide-spaced, as if the horse had sprung off in panic.

Quickly, Calvin pushed through the branches of the thicket that were lacing the old opening.

Before him was the mass of jumbled rock that stretched to the water's edge. Cairn's Pool was a dramatic-looking spot, rimmed, except in this one place, by a steep-faced cliff.

There was no way up the cliff at the right, for there the edge was sharply cut as if by a giant cleaver, but to the left a rubble of rocks formed a slope on which you could climb to the narrow shelf that ran for a few feet along the face of the cliff.

The Hideaway opened on that shelf. It was not an impressive cave; it was a narrow, dark affair, leading back and down into the cliff, and he could not remember whether they had ever carried out their childhood's dream of completely exploring it.

Helen was not on the rocks around him, she was not on the shelf before the cave, she was not anywhere that he could see. Terror for her was tightening like a hand on his heart.

He began to climb the slope of broken rock, his eyes searching every crevice. He reached the shelf and stopped before the entrance to the cave.

The light fell only a little way on the rock floor, then there was darkness. He said, "Helen!" out of a parched throat.

There was no answer. He stepped back, not to offer the back of his head towards that darkness, and turned to find a rock on the shelf, to have a weapon in his hand as he entered.

Some remote place in his mind was remembering the hours that he and Helen had spent on this rock platform looking off to the dead tree across the way that jutted out from a mass of rock at the cliff's base. The fish hawks used to plummet down from that tree.

From the edge of the shelf where he was the cliff went straight down to the water. He looked down at it. And there he saw her. She lay still and quiet, her face a queer green white in the green depths.

Calvin had no consciousness of coming down from the cliff. There was a moment when he was standing, looking down at the girl in the water, and there was another moment when he was down the shelf, on the edge of the jumbled rocks, tearing off coat, trousers, shoes.

Then he was in the water, swimming down, down, down, till his hands clutched at her.

It seemed an eternity that he struggled and lifted, his lungs burning, before her dead weight was in his shoulder and he was clawing his way up to air.

He fought his way back to the rocks, bearing that weight, clambering with her across the boulders. He took her through the thicket where there was earth on which to lay her.

He put her face down, her head turned, one arm stretched out from the shoulder, the other bent at the elbow. He crouched, straddling her slender thighs, his palms on her small of her back, his fingers on her ribs, hoping desperately that he was remembering the right positions he had been taught.

Forward he went, pressing gently his arms straightening, then he snapped back. Then for ward again.

You must never stop. You must never give up. A doctor had told him that he had worked over a man for two hours before he had shown a sign of life. The Red Cross book said that people had been brought back after four hours of unconsciousness . . . even after eight hours.

Helen could not have been in the water long. He had been close behind her. That horse had passed him only a few minutes ago . . .

But she must have been in the water before that. She must have tied her horse, climbed to the shelf and been flung off. She had been in long enough to give up the struggle, to sink.

But Helen was a good swimmer. She must have been unconscious be-

from the treacherous water. She had been struck on the back of her head—he could see blood seeping through the wet black hair. He could not see his rhythmic motion to touch it, but he told himself insistently that it was not a deep cut.

She was only stunned. And if she had been unconscious when she fell, she could not have taken in much water.

What time was it now? He would not move his hand to look at his watch. Probably it had stopped.

His eyes were on her blood-drenched cheek, and suddenly it seemed to him not so pale, but he told himself that the sun trickling on him. And then the fingers of her bent arm began to curve, to make little clutching motions, and a sound in her throat.

Calvin's hands stopped, ready to name instantly if the tenuous attempt at breathing failed. But suddenly she breathed in deep-drawn sighs. The wet black lashes stirred.

He felt an emotion so intense that it was like agony. He lay down beside her and put his head close to her. "Can you hear me?"

"Of course," she said in a perfectly normal but faintly wandering voice. She made a sudden attempt to sit up, and he sat up quickly and eased her back. "Lie still . . . you have to be still."

She said distinctly, "I'm all right," and sat up, struggling against his arm, and then bent over a little.

"I'm all right," she said again, and then, wonderingly, "I'm all wet."

"You must keep still." The book had said there must be no strain on the heart. But Helen had not been hit drowned, she had been stunned. But there must be no chill.

"Keep very quiet. I'll be right back."

He hated to leave her even for a moment. He looked searchingly about. Oaxley was standing peacefully, his ears unmoving. They would have been pricked, Calvin thought, if anyone were near. He parted the branches of the thicket and looked through. Nothing to be seen but the stretch of churned-up-looking rocks and the blue water and the steep face of the opposite cliff.

Quickly he crossed the rocks, his feet slipping now, and spat upon his clothes and shoes from the water's edge. He looked up at the edge before the Hideaway. It was empty. He raced back through the thicket.

Helen was sitting up, smoothing back her wet hair. He knelt, taking off her wet coat and putting on his dry one.

"We ought to get your wet things off," he said worriedly.

"Did I fall in?"

"Don't you remember?" He was hurrying on his trousers, kneeling again to put on his shoes. "Don't you know what happened?"

"I was just standing there. Up on the shelf. Waiting for you."

"Oh, my darling!" he said, his throat tight. "Don't you remember anything more?"

Her grey eyes, looking at him, were clear with consciousness, with no memory of fear in them. "Not a thing. Just standing there, looking out at the pool."

That could happen. Memory stopped at the moment before. It had happened to him once with a horse. He demanded, "Your head . . . does it hurt?"

She said, "It feels all right." She amended, "Just a little funny." She put a hand to the back of it and said surprisedly, "It's cut . . . that hurts a little."

Shock was anaesthesia. He must get her back before the numbness wore off.

"But what happened?" she was asking now. "What happened?"

"I didn't write that note," he told her. "But never mind that now; we've got to get going. Can you stay on a horse?"

"Of course."

"Take it easy," he warned. He was facing her, drawing her gently to her feet. "Take it easy."

"I'm all right." Then he saw her eyes go past him and fill with surprise. She said, "Why, John?"

Calvin whirled. John Cauldron's lean figure was behind them, just emerging from the thicket. He was staring at them with a singular

astonishment on that usually shuttered face of his.

"Why, how did you get here?" said Helen in that same welcoming surprise.

"On foot. From the outer road," John spoke as if giving himself time to take his bearings. The astonishment was gone and his face held only thoughtful speculation. "It doesn't take long, motoring along the road."

"But how did you know? Did Calvin—"

"I suppose I could carry it off," said John Cauldron, his voice empty of everything but a quiet, considering finality, "but it is too much trouble to do all over again."

He added, "And Calvin Morse has some brains . . . Don't move," he said to Calvin in the same measured, unexcited tone. "The gun in my pocket is trained on you."

Calvin had been looking at that bulging pocket in which John's hand was hidden.

"I shoot rather well. I take no chances. Though I admit to some astonishment," John said dryly, "at this . . . revival."

As if to exonerate that astonishment, John said, "In the Hideaway I could have no notion what was happening. When I'd sent off your horse, I went to see if I could get you closer to these rocks—I wanted it to look as if your horse had thrown you there when you were trying to make him drink—and I heard a horse coming, so I went back to the cave."

A dry amusement came into his voice. "You were very careful, I saw, Morse, not to turn your back to it."

Calvin was silent, his eyes never leaving John. He could feel Helen's fingers tightening on his arm.

"From the way you disappeared, I imagined you were rushing to the rescue and I thought it all waste motion. I waited to give time for you to get her out, to get her on the horse—I could not hear from the cave whether the horse had started or not. But I certainly thought you were on the way back. Then, when I was crossing the rocks I heard sounds . . . but you were at such an angle—"

His voice changed to sudden savagery.

"You had to come blundering to the rescue, didn't you? Dragging her back to life. And now I've got to put a bullet through your head and make it look like suicide at discovery of her drowned body. But you've done me one service, dragging her back. Now I can put her just at the edge of the rocks where her horse might have thrown her."

The distance was too great for a rush, Calvin judged. But if he could get his body between John and Helen—

John's head was cocked, listening. "No one coming yet. But time's short. Her horse will give the alarm. I must get back to the highway." He ordered, "Walk down to the rocks. Single file, Morse ahead."

He moved along, farther from the opening, to keep the distance between them. "No tricks. If you try any tricks, Morse, I'll make her suffer before she dies."

Calvin heard Helen say, "John!" in a strange, muted voice.

"Yes, 'John!'" John mimicked. "What did you think John was? The tame cat? The harmless, necessary cat? The ever-grateful orphan? I am more a Cauldron than you! And I have had to take as charity what should have been my own. But not forever. Not forever. I always knew

— Oh, for a long time I've known that there would be an end. This end. Walk on!"

"But, John, why?" Helen's voice was stronger now. "Why?"

"You don't know your father's will do you? You'll have to die unknowing, but know this much: The Folly comes to me. Not to the children of Burk. To me. To me. But I had to clear the way."

Helen said, "Not . . . Lucy?"

There was horror in her voice. She had, Calvin thought—she had desperately to know.

"That was not pleasant," said John. "This is not pleasant." Then his mouth thinned to a grimace of mockery. "But you wanted a complete change."

He brought the revolver out of his pocket. He said to Calvin, "It ought to be close, for suicide, but cigarette burns will do . . . And it's your gun too."

There was no sound in the silent woods behind them, no sound of a hurrying horse. Hadn't Helen's horse gone straight home? Had he refused the closed gate and veered off into another trail? Or had he quivered, crossing the fields, and stopped to graze?

But someone might come at any moment. At any moment. If only he could delay.

He said mockingly, "You think you're foolproof, don't you?"

"I always have been."

"Always?"

John Cauldron looked at him with that old air of secret amusement. He listened again, then, reassured, said mildly, "They always thought Lee Cromer's death was an accident, didn't they?"

"Lee?" came from Helen.

"You never doubted but that his gun went off accidentally, did you? Helen? Clambering over rocks. These very rocks you will die on. I met him here. He thought it by chance. It was not difficult to get behind him with a rock. Then I set off his gun."

SAVAGE now, John continued, "You didn't think I'd let you have more children, did you? Now, on with you, Morse ahead!"

Calvin said, "Run! Run to the horse!" and hurled himself on John. He could not make it, he knew; the gun was on him, point-blank, aimed at his stomach, so ducking was no good, but in his death struggle he might bring John down, give Helen time.

He saw the finger move on the trigger and in the same split second heard the roar of the shot.

He was not falling. He felt nothing. And in the moment that he was lunging forward he saw John Cauldron's face changing, like a face in slow motion, from ferocity to stupefaction, and then he was on John and they were rolling over and over on the ground, and he was twisting John's wrist behind him.

John shrieked and kicked and got away, crashing through the thicket, and Calvin, not stopping for the dropped gun, took after him.

Across the rocks John fled and up the slope of tumbled rock. He stopped, then ran again, and Calvin slipped in his untied shoes, and when he gained on John, John whirled and sent a rock back that he dodged, and then another that caught him in the middle and knocked the wind out of him.

John made the shelf, but Calvin was right behind him now, and John ran past the entrance to the cave, on to the limit of the shelf, then scuttled, like a frantic crab, up the face of the cliff to the top.

He raced on about the edge of the cliff, circling the pool.

He came to the spot above the point of rocks, and with a scream that the cliff walls re-echoed, he flung himself down, his body splintering through the branches of the dead tree from which the fish hawks used to plummet. From the first boulder that it struck the body fell like a sack on to a lower rock.

Calvin came slowly down the slope. Helen was standing on the rocks, staring across the water, her face a mask of horror. Calvin put his hands gently on her shoulder and turned her about. "It's all over."

Helen was in a big chair in the main room, her head resting against the pillow behind it. It did not hurt, unless she jarred it, and the room was steady unless she moved her head, and then it moved from left to right, very dizzily, but only for a moment. Niel said she would be all right in a few days.

Niel was there now with Abbie, and Burk and Betty Van Hoyt and Sutton were there with the sandy-haired officer with the notebook, and A. J. Regan was there.

Calvin had been talking. Helen was very proud of the way he told them; he did not say anything that was not true, but he left everything unsaid that was irrelevant now, and hurtful.

"And that's the story," he said. "We were very much in the dark until Mr. Regan gave me the important facts in Tennessee law."

He added, "And here's the gun. It's my gun, all right. He took it the night before last."

"Oh, no, he didn't," said Burk. "I did." He said, smiling broadly, "And you can thank me for it. The cartridge that didn't hit you wasn't a dud; it was a blank."

He explained, "I dropped into your room to get some cigarettes off you. You weren't there, but the gun was, and I borrowed it. You see, I'd promised to let the stable boys have mine, and I'd forgotten to bring it along, so this would do just as well. I wasn't sure what they were going to do—shoot some game Helen didn't want shot, I supposed—so just for the heck of it, I'd ordered some blanks. So I put in the blanks."

The sheriff asked, "How did John Cauldron get it?"

"Oh, he saw it in my room next morning—he was in there when I was getting out early to go riding. He asked what I was doing with a gun, and I said it was Calvin's and I'd taken it to give the boys. I didn't say anything about the blanks. I wasn't going to spoil the joke. I expect he pocketed it after I was gone."

He added, "I never thought about it again. Not with that fracas in the gallery, and then the excitement over Rita Rand."

How casually he mentioned her, Helen thought. And that casualness wasn't assumed. He had been very cheerful when he said that everything was over, had been over since the night of the quarrel, between him and Rita.

"It wasn't a good idea, Helen," he had said. "Not one of my best."

It hadn't been a good idea for Rita, either, Helen thought.

Regan was talking about Rita now, asking the sheriff if he had any line on the car that had hit

her. Rita had recovered consciousness that afternoon and made a statement.

"She never saw it," said Sutton. "She said she was walking along, and it came up behind her. That's something we'll never know. But she's coming along fine now." He gave Regan a quizzical look. "Your visit cheered her up a lot."

Regan would be good for Rita, Helen thought. He was young and vigorous, a coming lawyer.

Regan was changing the subject. "There's no question now, is there, that my client is in the clear?"

"No question at all, son. Not after the statement made to Mrs. Cromer and Mr. Morse. Just a few formalities."

Sutton was getting up, and the sandy-haired officer put away his notebook and rose too. Sutton came over to Helen, and she sat up quickly to shake hands, and for a moment the kind, sober face whirled before her, then it steadied.

"I guess you don't need to have me tell you how sorry we are, m'am, nor how grateful that it didn't turn out worse," Sutton said.

"I expect he wasn't right in his head; that's the kindest thing one can think of him."

"Yes." She must make herself smile, she thought. No use explaining that never, never, while there was the breath of life in her, would she think one kind thing of John Cauldron.

The sheriff held her hand a moment before he let it drop. "A lucky thing for you that Mr. Morse was around."

Now she could really smile. "Yes. Yes, it was."

"I'll be going along too," said Regan.

Helen waited until he was out of the room, then she said slowly, "Now we can really talk."

She had not leaned back; she wasn't going to be a wan invalid when she said this, she thought. She wasn't going to say it all tonight; she and Burk could talk later about Rawley and what could be done for him. But the part about the Polly had to be said.

"I want to tell you what I'd like to do," she said. She wasn't sounding excited or emotional, she thought approvingly, but very quiet and controlled.

"Niel is right—this place is, too much for me," she went on. "I want to get away from it. The memories are too dreadful. I can't give it away, but I can let half of it to be used as a hospital or a convalescent home—Niel will know. And if Burk wants to live in it—"

"In the other half of it?" said Burk scornfully.

"You'll find half of it is big enough to care for."

Betty Van Hoyt said quickly, "Why, yes, Burk. You could throw the front hall into your side, and run a wall out from the archedway."

Burk gave a sudden laugh. "Not too high a wall if there are pretty nurses! But what are you going to do, Helen? Move into the tower?"

"I never want to see the place again!" she said, her feeling breaking out. "Too much has happened. Oh, I'll change. I know, and come back for visits, but I want something else. Another life. A life of my own. Away from Cauldron's Folly."

She couldn't say it any plainer than that, she thought desperately, and if he had meant anything by that "Oh, my darling—" If the long years of love and longing had meant anything—

"You know," said Calvin Morse into the sudden silence, "that in China when you save someone from drowning—"

He was speaking to them all, but his eyes were looking at her, and she would never, she thought, never forget the look in them, never, any more than she would forget the moment when he had thrown himself at John Cauldron facing that gun.

"So," she heard him saying, his voice still light, and now very gay, "I am taking Helen to New York."

(Copyright)

Next Week's Fireside Novel

BLANDINGS' WAY

By ERIC HODGINS

One of the most amusing books to come of late out of America is "Blandings' Way," states Howard Spring, noted English critic and reviewer. It is a sequel to "Mr. Blandings Builds His Dream House," one of the world's most successful books, which was equally popular as a film. But it is not necessary to have either read the book or seen the film to enjoy "Blandings' Way," which is a story complete in itself.

It is a comedy of family life, played out in the

rural setting of the famous Dream House. There are misadventures along the way for the Blandings in their efforts to be absorbed in the district's community life. At the same time Mr. Blandings' career as a copywriter shifts the scene from the bucolic countryside to the crazy world of high-pressure advertising.

The novel is too long to be published in one issue, so it will be presented in two books, the first of which will appear next week.

ALL characters in the serials and short stories which appear in The Australian Women's Weekly are fictitious, and have no reference to any living person.

WHEN Jennifer got back the old lady was reading the paper. The girl packed the hot-water bottles around her and got her to take the best part of the cup of the milk drink, and to eat about half of one biscuit. While she was coaxing her to eat the rest there was a knock at the front door; she went downstairs, and it was the postman with a heavy parcel.

She took it from him and carried it up to show to her grandmother, with an instinct that anything that would stimulate and arouse her interest was good. "Look what the post's brought," she said.

The old lady said, "Oh, that's dear Jane. How sweet of her. It's a parcel from Australia, Jenny. She sends one every month."

"It's got an English post-mark, Granny," the girl said.

"I know, my dear. She puts the order in Australia and the food comes from England somehow or other. So funny."

"Shall I open it?"

"Please. I must write and thank her." The parcel contained six cartons of dried fruit and a tin of lard; Jennifer now knew where the cartons she had seen in the larder came from. She asked, "Granny, who is Aunt Jane? She isn't mother's sister, is she?"

"No, my dear. Your mother never had a sister. She's my niece, my brother Tom's daughter."

"She's the one who quarrelled with the family because she married an Australian?"

"Yes, dear. Tom and Margaret were very much upset, but it's turned out very well. I liked him, but Tom found him drinking white port with Jeffers, the butler, in the middle of the morning, and he used to

swear dreadfully, and never saluted anybody. So different to our army."

Jennifer smiled. "What was Aunt Jane like?"

"Such a sweet girl—but very stubborn. Once she decided to do a thing there was no arguing with her; she had to see it through. I sometimes think that you're a little like her, Jenny."

Time was slipping by; if she were to get money that day she could not linger.

"I'm going over to Blackheath now," she said. "I'll get a few things for the night, and I'll get some money and some bits of things we need. I'll be back about tea-time, but I'll leave a note explaining everything to the nurse. Will you be all right, do you think?"

"I'll be quite all right, my dear. Don't hurry; I shall get a little sleep, I expect."

Jennifer went downstairs and left a note on the hall table for the nurse, and travelled across London to her room at Blackheath. She got there about midday, packed a bag, went to the bank, and rang up her office to say that she would have to take the rest of the week off to look after her grandmother. Then she snatched a quick meal in a cafe, and travelled back to Ealing.

She was lucky in that when she reached the house the doctor and the nurse were both there, with her grandmother. She waited in the hall till they came down from the bedroom; a few letters had arrived, and that seemed to be bills and one air-mailed from Australia.

That would be Jane Dorman, Jennifer thought, who had married the Australian who drank port with the butler and never

saluted anybody, and who still sent parcels of dried fruit to her aunt after thirty years. They must have been very close at one time for affection to have endured so long.

She looked round for the candle, but she could not find it; perhaps the doctor and the nurse had it upstairs with them. She stood in the dusk of the hall, waiting.

Presently they came out of the room upstairs, and the staircase was suddenly flooded with light as the nurse turned the switch. Jennifer went forward to meet them. "The electricity's come on!" she exclaimed.

"Of course. Didn't you go and see them?"

"They said they wouldn't turn it on until I paid the bill."

"The man came and turned it on the afternoon." They left that for the moment, and the nurse said, "This is Dr. Thompson."

He was a fairly young man, not more than about thirty; he looked tired and overworked. He said, "You're Miss Morton? Let's go into one of these rooms."

They went into the drawing-room; it was as cold as a tomb, but anyway the light was on. Surrounded by the Burnese relics, the girl asked, "How is she, Doctor?"

The young man glanced at her, summing her up. "She's very ill," he said. "Very ill, indeed. You know what's the matter with her, of course?"

Jennifer said, "She's got no money."

"Yes. Malnutrition. Starvation, if you like."

"Could we get her into a hospital?"

He shook his head. "I don't think there's a chance. I don't think any hospital would take her. You see, the beds are all needed for urgent cases; she might be bedridden for years if she gets over the immediate trouble."

"My father's coming down from Leicester to-morrow," the girl said. "He's a doctor. I think he'll have to decide what to do. I'll stay with her to-night in any case."

"You'll be alone here, will you?"

"Yes." She hesitated, and then she said, "Do you think she'll die?"

He bit his lip.

"Well . . . she's definitely weaker than when I saw her yesterday, I'm afraid . . . Nurse here has to get some sleep to-night. I tell you what I'll do. I'll look in myself about eleven, just before I go to bed. In the meantime, this is what she's got to have."

He gave her her instructions, and went off with the nurse; Jennifer went up to her grandmother's bedroom. It was warm with an electric radiator burning; the old lady lay in bed, but turned her eyes to the girl.

"I see you've got a radiator going, Granny," she said. "That's much better."

"It was that nice man," she said weakly. "I heard somebody moving around downstairs, and I thought it was you, Jenny. And then somebody knocked at my door, and it was him. He said he hoped he wasn't intruding but he thought I'd like the radiator, and he came in and turned it on and saw that it was burning properly. And then he said he hoped I'd soon be better."

"How nice of him," the girl said.

She made her grandmother comfortable and went out quickly to get to the shops before they shut. She bought the things that the doctor had told her to buy and a little food for her own supper.

On her way back to the house she passed the electricity department, and saw a light still burning in the office window, though the door was locked. She stopped, and rang the bell; the manager himself came to the door of the shop.

He peered at her in the half-light, his eyes dazzled by the strong light at his desk. "It's after hours," he said. "The office is closed now. You'll have to come back in the morning."

"It's me—Jennifer Morton," she said. "I just looked in to thank you for turning on the electricity."

He recognised her then. "Oh, that's all right," he said. "I'll rang up head office, and they gave permission."

In fact, he had sat for an hour staring blankly at the calendar, unable to work, and with the girl's words searing in his mind. Then he had rung up his supervisor and had repeated to him what Jennifer had said. He had added a few words of his own, saying that he had checked with the district nurse, and he was going to reconnect the supply.

He had said quickly that they could take whatever action seemed best for them; if the job required behaviour of that sort from him, he didn't want the job. He was now waiting for the storm to break, uncertain of his own future, unsettled and reluctant to go home and tell his wife.

"I've got my cheque-book here," she said. "I can pay the bill now, if you like."

IT might seem the supervisor if the cheque were dated on the same day as his own revolt, the manager thought. He showed Jennifer into the office and she sat down and wrote out the cheque; in turn, he wrote out the receipt, stamped it, and gave it to her.

"How is your grandmother to-night?" he asked.

"Not too good," she replied. "She's got a better chance now that we can get some warmth into the house. I'm sorry I said that to you this morning. One gets a bit strung up."

"Oh, that's all right," he said. "Can't you get her into the hospital?"

The girl shook her head.

"She's too old," she said a little bitterly. "They don't want people in there who are just dying of old age. She's lost her pension because we've left India, and the fund's run dry. She can't get an old-age pension under the new scheme. She's spent all her capital in trying to live, and sold most of her furniture, and the bank won't give her any more upon the house. There's no place for old ladies in the brave new world."

He tightened his lips, conscious of his own dark fear. "I know," he said. "It's getting worse each year. Sometimes one feels the only thing to do is to break out and get away while you're still young enough. Try it again in Canada, perhaps, or in South Africa."

She looked at him, startled. "Is that what you're thinking of?"

"If I was alone I'd go, I think," he said. "But it's the children—that's what makes it difficult. They've got to have a home . . ."

Please turn to page 61

ASTHMA & BRONCHITIS COUGHS CURBED IN 3 HOURS-SLEEP SOUND

Coughing, Difficult Breathing, Wheezing and Painful Nasal Sinuses, Quickly Helped by Scientific Compound that Dissolves Congestion in Three Hours, thus Restoring Vigour and Vitality and Sound Lasting Sleep.

Do you or any of your family suffer from stubborn, nagging coughs especially in the morning and at night? Do you cough and cough struggling to raise phlegm? Do you suffer so badly at times that you can't seem to get your breath, especially in bed, and have to try to sleep sitting up in a chair? Do these terrible spells of coughing and difficult breathing tire you out, keep you from your work, and destroy your appetite? Does congestion in the nasal sinuses (commonly called catarrh) interfere with your breathing and at times cause severe pains, especially in the forehead and each cheekbone?

Stop Terrible Coughing Breathe Freely—Easily

Thousands of Australians have found that it is no longer necessary to suffer from these painful symptoms of attacks of Asthma, Bronchitis and Nasal Congestion since the perfection of a remarkable medicine called MENDACO.

American Discovery Works Through Blood

The original MENDACO formula was discovered in the United States more than 20 years ago. Since that time it has been improved and perfected to such a degree that MENDACO is now the most widely-used medicine in the world for attacks of Asthma, Bronchitis and Nasal Congestion.

MENDACO is not a cough syrup, a smoke, injection, spray or liquid, but is in little, tasteless, easy-to-take tablets. Within three hours after you take the first dose of MENDACO it is carried by the blood to the lungs, bronchial tubes and membranes of the nasal sinuses. Then it has the remarkable property of dissolving the congesting phlegm that causes your trouble. Not only does it do this but it also relaxes thousands of tiny muscles in the bronchial tubes so that you can get good air in and out of your lungs, breathe freely, sleep well and thus regain your natural vigour and vitality. Yes, right from the first dose you

feel the benefits of MENDACO find your cough going away and life again worth living.

Attacks The Cause

Irritation of the membranes of the nasal sinuses, the throat and bronchial tubes may arise from many causes such as excessive smoking, colds, dust, smoke, fog, industrial gases, motor fumes, certain foods and many flowers and weeds.

When the membranes are irritated they frequently give off large quantities of phlegm. This phlegm is the cause of much coughing, wheezing, sneezing, difficult breathing, painful sinuses and loss of sleep and energy.

MENDACO, through its remarkable properties, acts to thin, loosen and remove this congesting phlegm. This scientific way actually assists in removing the underlying cause of your painful symptoms of coughing, sneezing, wheezing, difficult breathing and other symptoms of Asthma, Bronchitis and Nasal Sinus Congestion attacks.

PRaised BY MILLIONS

Thousands who had suffered for years—many who had given up hope—have been amazed to find results which seem almost like a miracle to them. This has been proved by the popularity of MENDACO in upwards of 70 countries throughout the world—not only in Australia but everywhere, such as United States, Canada, England, South Africa, Spain, India, Brazil, Mexico, Uruguay, etc. Over five million packages of MENDACO have been used—proof positive of the remarkable success of this scientific product.

My Thanks to Mendaco

Users can not praise MENDACO enough and write the most grateful letters of thanks. For instance, Mr. Arthur W. Haney recently wrote: "I had Asthma for 25 years and there have been times when life meant nothing because of the terrible coughing, sneezing and wheezing. I couldn't sleep and lost a lot of weight. I tried everything and became discouraged, but heard of MENDACO and decided to give it a try. To my surprise, and delight after I had taken only four MENDACO tablets I began to breathe easier and soon I was not bothered at all. It has now been more than four years since I first took MENDACO and I can say that it has kept me free from the suffering of these terrible attacks all these years."



Don't Let Coughing and Difficult Breathing keep you awake Half the Night.

Guaranteed—No Benefit, No Pay

No matter how long you or any of your loved ones have suffered from these terrible attacks of Asthma, Bronchitis or Nasal Congestion, you owe it to yourself to see how quickly MENDACO may give you the same benefits that it has to millions of others. But you do not need to risk anything in proving this to yourself, because MENDACO is backed by a positive guarantee of no benefit—no pay. So get MENDACO from your chemist or store today and if you are not completely satisfied and feel like a new person after giving MENDACO a fair trial, simply return the empty packet and all your money will be returned. Take this opportunity today to win freedom from the attacks of Asthma, Bronchitis or Nasal Congestion.

MENDACO
The Guaranteed Medicine for ASTHMA, BRONCHITIS and NASAL CATARRH

THE AUSTRALIAN WOMEN'S WEEKLY — July 30, 1952

JENNIFER had no time to say and talk. She cut it short and hurried back to the house.

The Far Country

Continued from page 60

give it to some charity in England for us?

"But we've been really worried about you since reading that letter about your vest, and Jack and I owe so much to you for all you did to help us thirty years ago. So if this will make things easier for you, will you take it with our very dearest love?"

"Your affectionate niece, 'Jane.'"

The girl laid the letter down. "It's all right, Granny," she said a little unsteadily. "She's got all the money in the world."

"Nonsense, my dear," the old lady said weakly. "She's only a farmer's wife. Stations, they call them in Australia, but it's only a big farm and not very good land, I'm told. She's made some mistake."

The girl wrinkled her brows, and glanced at the letter again. "I don't think it's a mistake—honestly. It's what she says, and I was reading something about this in the paper the other day." She laid the letter down. "Look, drink your milk before it gets cold."

She could not get her to drink much, and the effort seemed to tire her, because she lay back on the pillows with her eyes closed, disinclined to talk. Jennifer removed the letter and the envelope to a table at the bedside and put the bankers' draft upon the dressing-table, carefully weighted with an embossed Indian silver hand-mirror. Then she went downstairs and had her own supper.

Later, when she took up some more milk, her grandmother said, "I've been thinking about so many things. About when I was a girl, my dear, and how different things were then."

Jennifer asked, "How were they different, Granny? Drink it up."

She took a little sip. "It was all so much easier, dear. My father—your great-grandfather—was in the Foreign Office, but he retired early, when I was about fifteen. Before that we lived in a big house on Putney Hill, near where Swinburne lived, but when he retired, in about 1886, we moved down into the country."

"My father bought Steep Manor, near Petersfield, with about thirty acres of land. I don't think his pension and my mother's investments amounted to more than a thousand pounds a year, but they seemed to be able to do such a lot with it, such a great, great deal."

"Drink a little more," the girl suggested. "What sort of things did you do?"

"Everything that genteel folk did do in those days, dear. My father kept three maid-servants in the house—everybody did then. And there was a gardener, and a gardener's boy who helped in the stables, and a groom. That was before the days of motor-cars, of course. My mother had her carriage with a pair of matched greys, such a pretty pair. My father and Tom and I all had our hacks, or hunters as we liked to call them, because we followed the hunt every week all through the winter."

The girl held the cup to the old lips again. "Wasn't it dull, just living in the country?" she asked.

"Oh, my dear, it wasn't dull. There was always such a lot to do. We kept pigs and we used to cure all our own hams and bacon. And then we used to give a dance every year and all our friends did the same, and the hunt ball, and people coming to stay. And then there were all the people in the village to look after; everybody knew everybody else, and everybody helped each other. There was never a minute to spare, and never a dull moment."

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She took a sip of the milk that Jennifer pressed on her.

"We always had a week in London every year," she said, "generally in May or June. It was theatres and dances every night."

I was presented at Court in 1892, to the Prince of Wales, and the old Queen came in for a moment and we all curtsied to her, all together. The lights, and all the men in their scarlet and blue dress uniforms, and the women in Court dress, with trains. I don't think I ever saw anything so splendid, except perhaps at the Durbar in nineteen hundred and eleven."

She paused. "You haven't been presented, have you, Jenny?"

The girl said, "No, Granny. I don't think it happens so much now."

"Oh, my dear, how much, how very much you young girls have to miss. We had so much, much more than you when we were young."

Jennifer tried to get her to drink a little more, but the old lady refused it.

"Garden-parties all through the summer," she murmured, "with tea out on the lawn under the cedar tree. There was tennis on the lawn for those who felt like it, but archery was what everybody went in for. Such a pretty sport upon a sunny afternoon, dear, with the sun and the scent of mignonette, between the cedar and the monkey puzzle tree . . ."

The old eyes closed. The girl withdrew the cup and put it on the side table, and gently relaxed her arm. Her grandmother seemed to sleep where she was put; the girl stood for a moment looking down at her. It didn't look so good, but there was nothing more that she could do for the time being, except to change the hot-water bottles.

"Good evening," he said. "How is she now?"

"Much the same," the girl replied. "If anything, I think she's a bit weaker."

"Has she taken anything?"

"She's taken about half a cup each time. I can't get her to take more than that."

"I'll just go up and see her. You'd better come up, too."

She was with him in the bedroom while he made his examination; the old lady knew him, but said very little. He made it short, bade her good-night cheerfully, and went downstairs again with Jennifer.

In the drawing-room he said, "I'm very sorry that there isn't a nurse with you."

She looked at him, "You mean, she's going?"

"She's not making any progress," he replied. "She's weaker every time I see her. I'm afraid there's only one end to that, Miss Morton."

He gave her some further instructions, and then he said, "I'll rang up the relieving officer about her to-day. I think he'll be coming round to see you to-morrow."

She said, "That's somebody who does out money, isn't it?"

"In a way," he replied. "He has power to give monetary relief to cases of hardship that aren't covered under any of the existing Acts. He's a municipal officer." He paused. "I wish I'd known about this patient earlier. I could have asked him to come round and see her months ago, but I had no idea."

Jennifer said, "I don't believe my grandmother would have seen him."

"Why not?"

She shrugged her shoulders. "She'd have looked on it as charity money. All her life, she's been more accustomed to giving to charities than taking from them."

"He's very tactful, I believe."

"He'd have to be," she said. "My grandmother's a lady—the old-fashioned sort."

There was a pause. "In any case," she said, "that won't be necessary now. Granny got a cheque to-day for five hundred pounds from a relation in Australia who was worried about her. There's enough money now to pay for anything she ought to have."

"Five hundred pounds!" he said. "That's a lot of money. Pity it didn't come three months ago."

"I know," she said. "It's just one of those things."

They went out into the hall and he put on his coat. He paused then, hat in hand. "She's got relations in Australia, has she? Do you know where they live?"

"They keep a sheep farm," the girl said. "Somewhere about a hundred and fifty miles from Melbourne, I think." He nodded slowly. "I still can't quite understand it," she said.

"Granny thought they were quite poor, but then this money arrived for her to-day. They must be very well off to send a sum like that."

"The graziers are doing very well," he said. "Everybody in that country seems to be doing very well." He hesitated. "I'm going to try it out there for a bit, myself."

She looked at him, surprised. "You are? Are you leaving England?"

"Just for a bit," he said. "I think it does one good to move around, and there's not much future in the Health Service. I think it'll be better for the children, too, and it's not like going abroad. I've got a passage booked for April. It's a bit of a gamble, but I've had it here."

"Where are you going to?" she asked. "What part of Australia?"

"Brisbane," he said. "I was there for a bit in 1944, when I was in the Navy. I liked it all right. I believe you could have a lot of fun in Queensland." He hesitated for a moment, and then said, "Don't talk about this, please, Miss Morton. It's not generally known yet that I'm going."

"I shan't talk," she said. "I don't know anyone in Ealing."

He went away, and she went back into the kitchen and stood thoughtful over the electric stove as she warmed up the milk again. The house was dead silent but for the low noise of wind and a little trickling noise of water from some gutter. She poured the milk into the cup and added the brandy, and took it up to her grandmother.

The old lady took a sip or two. Then she said, "Jenny."

There was a long pause while she gathered strength, and then she said, "My cheque-book. In the small left-hand drawer of the bureau. And my pen."

"Do you want to write a cheque, Granny?" The old eyes signified assent. "Leave it till the morning. Drink a little more of this, and then get some sleep."

The old lady pushed the cup aside. "No. Now."

The girl put the cup down and went downstairs. She knew that the doctor had been right and that her grandmother would die that night. She was not frightened now; her duty was to do what she wanted in the last few hours. She was calm and competent and thoughtful as she brought the pen and cheque-book and blotting-pad to the bedside.

"Are these what you want, Granny?"

The old lady nodded slightly,

OUR GARDENING SERVICE

READERS may obtain leaflets on subjects of current interest to home gardeners by sending this coupon with a stamped, addressed envelope to Box 4088, G.P.O., Sydney.

Any ONE of the following titles may be selected:
● How to Plant, Prune, and Spray Roses.
● Winter Vegetable Culture.
● How to Grow Good Spring Flowers.
● Planting, Pruning, and Spraying Fruit Trees.

Name of leaflet (one only)

Stamped (3d.), addressed envelope is enclosed.

then said, "Bring me that thing."

The girl was puzzled. "What thing is it?" And then she got up and fetched the draft from the dressing-table, and said, "This?"

Her grandmother nodded weakly, took it from her, and put on her spectacles. "Such a funny sort of cheque. I never saw one like it."

She endorsed it on the back with a hand that trembled, with a signature that was barely legible. Then, with a sudden spurt of energy, she took the cheque-book and wrote quite a legible cheque for four hundred pounds, payable to Jennifer Morton.

The girl, looking on as she wrote, said, "Granny, you mustn't do that. I don't want it, and you'll need the money when you get well."

The old lady whispered, "I want you to do something for me, Jenny. Write letters now, send this to my bank and this to yours. Then go and post them."

"I'll do that in the morning, Granny. I can't leave you alone to-night."

The old lady gathered her ebbing strength, and said, "Go and write them now, my dear, and bring them up and show me. And then go out and post them."

"All right." She could not disobey so positive and direct a command. She thought as she wrote the letters at her grandmother's bureau in the drawing-room that she could sort the matter out with her father next day.

She brought the letters and the envelopes up to the bedside and showed them; the old lady did not speak, but watched her as she put the letters and the cheques into the envelopes and sealed them down. The girl said, "There they are, Granny, all ready to post. May I post them in the morning?"

The head shook slightly. "Now."

The old head nodded slightly, and the girl went down and put her coat on, and ran most of the way to the post office, and most of the way back. She came back into the bedroom flushed and breathing quickly, but her grandmother's eyes were closed, and she seemed to be asleep.

The girl went down to the kitchen and made herself a cup of tea, and ate a little meal of toast and jam. Then she went back to the bedroom and settled down in the chair before the electric radiator.

At about half-past twelve the old lady opened her eyes and said, "Jenny, did you post the letters?"

"I posted them, Granny."

"There's a dear girl," the voice from the bed said weakly. "I've been so worried for you, but you'll be all right with Jane."

The girl blinked in surprise. The old lady said something that she could not catch. And then she said, "It's not as if we were extravagant, Geoffrey and I. It's been a change that nobody could fight against, this going down and down. I've had such terrible thoughts for you, Jenny, that it would go on going down and down, and when you are as old as I am you would look back at your

room at Blackheath and your office work, as I look back on my life at Steep Manor, and you'll think how very rich you were when you were young."

It did not make sense to the girl. She said, "I'm just going to take the bottles down and fill them, Granny. I'll be back in a few minutes."

Her grandmother said, "I always took a hot-water bottle with me when we went out on shikar. Geoffrey's bearer, dear old Mung Bah, used to boil up water over the wood fire and fill it for me, while Geoffrey cleaned his gun in front of the tent. Such lovely times we had out in the jungle, dear. Such lovely places . . ." The old voice died away into silence.

The girl took the hot-water bottles and went quickly downstairs to fill them. When she came back with them and put them in the bed around the old lady, her grandmother was lying with closed eyes; she seemed fairly comfortable, but the respiration was much worse.

Presently the old lady spoke suddenly from the bed. Jennifer missed the first words again; she may have been half asleep.

She heard,—"On twenty-two thousand a year, better than we lived at Steep. Give her my very dearest love when you see her, Jenny. I'm so happy for you now. It was so sweet of her to send those lovely fruits. Be sure to tell her how much we enjoyed them."

There was a long pause, and then she said, "So glad she sent the money for your fare. I've had so much, much more than you poor girls to-day."

Jennifer was on her feet now; there was something here that had to be cleared up. She held her grandmother's hand between her own young, warm ones. "What did you give me that money for, Granny? What do you want me to do with the four hundred pounds? Try to tell me."

The old lips muttered, "Dear Jane. Such lovely fruits."

The girl stood by the bedside, waiting. If she had understood the old lady at all she was making an incredible proposal, but, after all, the doctor was going.

She said, "Try to tell me what you want me to do with the four hundred pounds, Granny."

There were a few faint, jumbled words that Jennifer missed, and then she heard,—"a little horse for you, everything that I had at your age."

"Granny! Did you give me the four hundred pounds because you want me to go to Australia to visit Aunt Jane? Is that what you're trying to say? Is that what you'd like me to do with the money?"

There was a faint, unmistakable nod. Then the old eyes closed again, as if in sleep.

At about two o'clock her grandmother spoke again for the last time. Jennifer, bending by the old lips, heard her say, "The dear Queen's statue in Moulmein . . . white marble . . . So sweet of the Burmese . . ."

About an hour later the old lady died. Jennifer, standing by the bedside, could not say within a quarter of an hour when death occurred.

To be continued



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Mandrake the Magician



MANDRAKE: Master magician,
LOTHAR: His giant Nubian
servant, and
PRINCESS NARDA: Have
come to a kingdom ruled by
PROF. METRO: Who lives in a
piano 50 feet high. Trained
elephants prance on the key-
board, and the immense

volume of sound enrages the
natives, who set fire to the
piano. Prof. Metro subdues
them with his supersonic box.
Leaving the Professor with
visions of the huge violin he
will build, Mandrake and his
friends set off on "Peril
Road." NOW READ ON:



MANDRAKE, NARDA AND LOTHAR
CONTINUE ON "PERIL ROAD."
IT IS LONELY, DESOLATE, AND
SINISTER, WITH ODD SIGNS
ALONG THE WAY--



POISONOUS INSECTS AND REPTILES SLITHER ACROSS THE
PATH. "STAY ON THE ROAD!" WARNS MANDRAKE. "THE SOIL
IS THICK WITH POISON IVY AND DEADLY BRAMBLES!"



"SOMEBODY HAS A MORBID SENSE OF HUMOR," SAYS MANDRAKE
AS VULTURES WHEEL OVERHEAD. "IF YOU CALL THAT HUMOR,"
SHUDDERS NARDA. "LOOK SOMEONE AHEAD!" CALLS LOTHAR--



A BEARDED HERMIT RUSHES OUT OF A SHACK, SCREAMING
AT THEM. "CAN'T YOU READ? DON'T YOU BELIEVE IN
SIGNS? THIS IS PERIL ROAD! RUN FOR YOUR LIVES!"



"WHAT HAVE WE TO FEAR, OLD MAN?" ASKS MANDRAKE.
"SEVEN DEADLY PERILS, MAYBE MORE, AND EACH IS WORSE
THAN THE ONE BEFORE IT! THE LAST PERIL IS MOST
TERRIBLE, OF ALL!" WARNS THE HERMIT.



"BUT FEW EVER PASS THE FIRST
PERIL ALIVE!" ROARS THE HERMIT.
"AND WHAT IS THE FIRST PERIL?"
ASKS MANDRAKE. "IT IS AN
SHOTS THE HERMIT, RAISING
HIS POWERFUL SHOTGUN!"



MANDRAKE GESTURES,
THE TWO BARRELS OF THE
SHOTGUN SEEM TO SPLIT
APART--



MANDRAKE GESTURES AGAIN. THE HERMIT'S LONG, BEARD
WHIPS AROUND LIKE A ROPE, BINDING HIM. "GO ON, FORTS!
SCREAMS THE ANGRY HERMIT! "YOU WON'T LAST AN HOUR
ON PERIL ROAD!"



TO BE CONTINUED



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little pillows"



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